



CONCERN OVER NEW SCHOOL SITE

Report by Dayna Farrington

CAMPAIGNERS are battling proposals for a 750-place girls' boarding school in Stourbridge which they fear will be built on green belt land.

Proposals to create the UK's first all girls' state boarding school have been revealed by Old Swinford Hospital school.

Neighbours and campaigners from the Save Stourbridge Green Belt group fear the earmarked site on Norton Road will lead to loss of land, although no planning application has yet been made.

Public consultation events will be held at Old Swinford Hospital on July 16, 18 and 19.

A spokesman for Old Swinford Hospital confirmed the Thomas Foley Foundation owns the land opposite the Roman Catholic graveyard on Norton Road, near Racecourse Lane junction.

A statement on the school's website said: "We are proposing to establish an 11-16 all girls' school in the borough of Dudley under the Government's free schools programme. The school will be open to girls of all faiths and none."

Mission

"This school will also be the UK's first all-girls' state boarding school, numbering 750 pupils when full (650 day and 100 boarding), and it will be a school with a distinct mission to make a particular contribution, through its pupils, to raise achievement and aspiration in and beyond the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley."

A spokesman for the green belt group said: "If it is the land the school have previously applied to build a sports field on, and we believe it would be that land, it is green belt."

"We think the school, if the plans go ahead, will be built on that land but no application has been submitted yet. We have no comment to make on the plans for the school, but we object to it if it is to be built on green belt land - that would be unacceptable."

"Planning applications for green belt land should be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. We are waiting to see if we can get any clarification from the school about where they are proposing to build this site."

Norton Road resident Duncan Chance added: "If that's where they plan to build the school, it is right next door to my house. I phoned the school and they told me they haven't put a proposal in yet, but it is the only land they have got that they can build on."

PUPILS CLIMBED SNOWDON FOR GUIDE DOG CHARITY



Karl Denning brings guide dogs Quasia and Ulma to meet the fundraising pupils at Ham Dingle Primary School in Stourbridge

THE Dudley fundraising group of Guide Dogs attended Ham Dingle Primary School to pick up a cheque for £1,382 raised by pupils.

The Stourbridge school raised the money to support Guide Dogs in the borough when a group of children from years four to six climbed Mount Snowdon in North Wales and

years one to three did a sponsored walk in the Cotswolds.

Each year a charity is chosen by the school, which is now hoping to choose the name for a guide dog puppy.

Karl Denning, a Dudley guide dog owner and speaker for the local group, said: "It's a

great amount for a primary school to raise for a charity. Our dogs Quasia and Ulma were loving all the attention from the children and staff."

Anyone who would like to know more about the charity can visit the Guide Dogs website at www.guidedogs.org.uk

POLICE

Concern growing over grassland fires

YOBS are causing chaos by starting fires on grassland around the Black Country as the heatwave continues.

Police have warned they will target those starting fires on grassland as forecasters say the summer heatwave is to last throughout July. Temperatures are to hit 30C (86F) this week and police have warned those starting fires put lives at risk.

Fire crews from across the Black Country and South Staffordshire tackled a blaze on National Trust land at Kinver Edge, near Stourbridge, last week, prompting a warning to avoid barbecues or discarding cigarettes in green areas.

● Kinver blaze - page 14

EVENTS

Towns get into the carnival spirit

TWO of Dudley borough's biggest carnivals are held this weekend.

Halesowen Carnival, music festival and food and drink festival is held in Highfield Park on Saturday from noon. The carnival is now in its fourth year and 2017's event attracted around 7,000 visitors. Stourbridge Carnival, in its 31st year, takes over the High Street on Sunday with lots of live entertainment and big crowds anticipated.

FOOTBALL

Yeltz president is club's new owner

HALESOWEN Town stalwart Colin Brookes is now the owner of the football club.

Club president Brookes has purchased the club at The Grove from Tammy Lynch, the wife of former owner Steve Lynch, who is serving a two-year ban from all football activity. It was announced in February that Mrs Lynch had agreed a deal but negotiations took longer than expected.

INSIDE

BOSTIN' START FOR FESTIVAL



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Admiring the magnificent motors in Dudley town centre as part of the festival



Kerry Pike from Birmingham in a 1953 Bentley at the classic car show

Black Country Festival off to a sizzling start

THE Black Country Festival got off to a bostin' start at the weekend.

Thousands flocked to events, from road runs to classic car shows and fun days, as the month-long celebrations got under way.

On Saturday around 1,000 people attended the Gornal Fun Day. Basking in the sunshine, families enjoyed face painting, fair rides, stalls, a birds of prey display and a battle reenactment group. Joan Porter, one of the organisers, said: "The whole event went really well and the weather was brilliant."

The same day crowds lined the streets to see a cavalcade of classic cars parade along the High Street in Dudley as part in the second Dudley Classic Car Show, with a display of 29 vehicles. The magnificent motors included a Rolls Royce, an Aston Martin and two E-type Jaguars. Organiser John Emms said: "Lots said they were really pleased they had come as they said they hadn't visited Dudley for years."

Mayor

On Sunday runners braved sweltering conditions to take on the Black Country Road Run - including West Midlands mayor Andy Street, blind fundraising legend Dave Heeley and Halesowen & Rowley Regis MP James Morris - which took place around Halesowen and was organised by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club.

Alan Bowler, one of the organisers, said: "There might have been a few people who were put off by the desperately hot weather but we probably had about 1,000 people come along. The feedback has been really positive."

The Black Country Festival, now in its fifth year, runs until July 29, with Black Country Day on July 14. A street food festival is at Stourbridge's Bonded Warehouse on Friday and Halesowen Carnival at Highfield Park on Saturday, the same day as the Chain Makers Festival in Cradley Heath, Tividale Park and Netherton Park fun days. Stourbridge Carnival is on Sunday.



Mayor Andy Street, Blind Dave Heeley and MP James Morris took part in the Black Country Road Run



Owl man Karl Perry brought Boo to Gornal Fun Day



Made up - Maddison Sharp, six, enjoyed Gornal Fun Day

Fly-tippers strike three times a day in district

FLY-TIPPERS are dumping piles of rubbish almost three times a day in South Staffordshire.

Figures show there were 946 incidents of fly-tipping in the district over the 12 month period from April 2017 to March 2018.

This means South Staffordshire Council's environmental crime team dealt are dealing with the issue on a daily basis.

Among the most common items being dumped include household waste, construction waste and white goods. But asbestos and clinical waste have also been found during the first five months of 2018.

Meanwhile, caravans are being filled with rubbish and dumped beside roads across the district. Councillor David Clift told a South Staffordshire Council meeting.

He said: "Caravans have been dumped, which seems to be a problem, particularly in Essington. We have had three caravans dumped on the side of the road full of rubbish. The team has dealt with it extremely effectively, but it meant closing the road for 24 hours to deal with it. We have had to get specialist equipment in."

Councillor Roger Lees, deputy leader of the council, said that covert cameras were being used to obtain evidence as part of the fight against fly-tipping. "It is down, except for April, and we continue to make every effort to make sure this continues," he said. "Well done to the team for their ongoing efforts."

Man dies in fall from factory roof

A MAN has died after falling from the roof of an industrial unit in Dudley.

The 43-year-old man was found in cardiac arrest after falling in Lower Gornal on Friday morning.

Ambulance crews and police were called to the scene off Deepdale Lane at 11.40am, where tape cordoned off an area outside a building operated by Surface Technik Ltd.

A helicopter was also seen landing at nearby playing fields next to Roberts Primary School.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said: "Police can confirm that the man who fell from a roof at an industrial unit in Deepdale Lane, Lower Gornal before midday died at the scene."

"The 43-year-old man lived in Wall-sall and investigations continue."

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) spokesman added: "HSE is aware of this incident and has supported the police who have primacy over the investigation."

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More than 300 fined in spy car campaign

MORE than 330 motorists on the school run have been slapped with fines after being caught by a spy car introduced as part of a crackdown on dangerous parking outside schools.

The Dudley Council camera vehicle has been out on the streets looking for evidence of parking outside schools with drivers facing fines of up to £70. Since the vehicle was introduced nine months ago in Dudley borough, parents have paid more than £11,500 in fines. The vehicle was introduced to improve children's safety and followed complaints about problem parking.

A total of 336 penalty notices were dished out between September 1 and June 22 and the council has so far collected £11,557 in fines.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare said the safety of children is 'of the highest priority'. The camera captures those motorists who do not observe the yellow zig-zag lines.

Councillor Shakespeare said: "Although a majority of motorists park responsibly, there are some that continue to park illegally and put the lives of our children at risk."

She added: "The zig-zag lines are there for a reason and we will continue to use the CCTV vehicle on the streets around our schools."

Most fines relate to bad parking outside Christ Church Primary School, Cosley, near to St Joseph's Primary at Kates Hill.

Funding offer to adapt properties

PEOPLE with mobility issues and other difficulties in the home can benefit from the Dudley Home Improvement Service.

The Dudley Council-run service oversees property adaptations for people of all ages who live in their own home or rent privately, with grants for works along with advice and practical support. People who are struggling with bathing, accessing the property or moving around within the home can apply. Typical adaptations include handrails, ramps, level access showers, lifts, even home extensions.

Councillor Laura Taylor, cabinet member for housing, said: "We want to help people stay safe and independent in their own homes."

Call 0300 555 0055.

Shop plan for site

A CONVENIENCE store could be built on the site of a former petrol station in Kingswinford. Plans have been submitted to Dudley Council for the site in Stream Road.

First look at museum's 1940s-60s town



An artist's impression of 40s-60s town

THIS exclusive image shows the 1940s-60s town that will be built at the Black Country Living Museum which has also revealed record profit and visitor numbers.

Based on two roads, Market Place and Pinfold Lane, next to the Dudley attraction's fairground, it will tell the area's story up to the closure of the Baggeridge Coal Mine in 1968.

It comes as the museum records its highest profit and visitor numbers. Almost 333,000 people went through the doors of the open-air attraction last year, contributing to a record

£7.3 million takings. The income provides a boost to the museum's £23m project for a 1940s and 60s town and a new visitor centre capable of taking in 5,000 people a day.

Chief executive Andrew Lovett said: "Our appeal and performance further strengthens the museum's financial position as we head into a phase of major development."

"Now we have the opportunity to develop the open-air attraction further. We have attractions based up to the 1930s, but we want to be able to extend our stage, taking it forward

to the 40s, 50s and 60s. We want to be able to accommodate more people, give them more to see and get them to stay here longer."

A total 332,778 people went through the doors of the museum on Tipton Road in 2017, up more than a third from 2013. The museum's commercial income resulted in a profit of £694,607, compared to £567,029 in 2016.

The trust spent £1.7m on retail, £3.6m on operating the museum and around £600,000 was spent on developing the site.

Crowds show support at Armed Forces Day

DUDLEY came together to pay tribute to the brave men and women of our armed forces on Sunday.

The annual Armed Forces Day event saw thousands of regulars, reserves, veterans and their families and supporters gather at a very sunny Himley Hall and Park.

The centenary special organised by Dudley Council marked 100 years since the formation of the Royal Air Force and also the end of the First World War.

Run in association with Black Country Housing Group, the event celebrated the work of service men and women past and present.

Entertainment for all the family included vintage fairground rides, Punch and Judy show plus live performances from vintage harmony trio The Bluebird Belles and RAF Cosford Voluntary Band wowed the crowds.

A special medal and badge presentation was held for veterans, who were honoured for their service in the forces.

Special guest and Second World War veteran Les Cherrington, aged 99, was also presented with a gift from The Wings Parachute Display Team, who jumped into the park during the event.

Mayor

Current and historic military vehicles were displayed in the park and people enjoyed history talks in the hall.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Taylor said: "Armed Forces Day is a complete credit to all involved and it was a joy to see so many families enjoying the event."

"I was delighted to be able to meet with some of the service men and women who give so much for our country and it was a complete honour to present veterans with their medals and badges as a way of thanks for all they have done."

Black Country Housing Group, one of the area's leading social housing providers, was the event's principal sponsor. Blind Monkey Brewery also supported the event.

South Staffordshire MP and Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson was in Llandudno, North Wales, on Saturday for this year's national event with the Princess Royal and Prime Minister Theresa May.



Local veterans Brian Lee, William Woodall and Ron Webb with members of the Marching Band of St Gregory's



Richard Cartwright, left, and Bob Coates in uniform



RAF Cadets on parade during Armed Forces Day

NEWS IN BRIEF

Family tribute to rider in fatal crash

THE family of an Oldbury motorcyclist, who was killed in a crash near Stourbridge, have paid tribute to the 'wonderful, funny man'.

Patrick Hendy died when his Triumph motorcycle was involved in a crash with a Mercedes C180 on the A458 Bridgnorth Road, near Stourton, at around 1pm on June 23.

The 48-year-old suffered serious injuries and died at the scene.

His family in a statement, they said: "We are utterly devastated by our loss of such a wonderful, funny man."

Staffordshire Police's Collision Investigation Unit has launched an investigation into the crash.

Roadworks scheme is nearly finished

AN end is in sight for a multi-million pound road improvement scheme.

Council chiefs have confirmed that the £6.3 million modernisation programme taking place on Pensnett High Street, Dudley, has reached its final stages and will be fully complete by the end of July.

The scheme has included widening the road, installing new traffic signals to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety in the area.

The final stages will see the further installation of traffic signals, road resurfacing and pavement repairs.

Howzat for charity fundraiser match?

CHARITIES will be in a spin when council officers and councillors go head-to-head in an annual cricket match.

The two teams from Dudley Council will be playing to raise funds for the Mayor of Dudley's chosen charities.

The annual clash, which is open to the public, will see councillors fielding a side to take on council officers at Stourbridge War Memorial Ground on July 13. All money raised will go to Headway Black Country, Hope Centre in Halesowen and the Whitehouse Cancer Support in Dudley.

Coffee morning to help Romanian orphans

A COFFEE morning will help to raise funds for a Romanian children's charity.

The event will take place on Saturday at the Hurst Green Methodist Church, in Narrow Lane, Halesowen, in aid of Caminul Felix village.

The centre provides care for 250 orphaned and abandoned children. The children craft items that will be on sale at the coffee morning, between 10.30am and noon.

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COUNTY NEWS

Motability show to feature 100 cars

THE country's biggest display of vehicles for disabled people will set up home at Birmingham's NEC at The Big Event.

Taking place tomorrow, Friday and Saturday, it offers disabled motorists and their families the chance to investigate the Motability Scheme, with free admission and free parking.

Free to attend and with free parking, it is the Motability Scheme's flagship event this summer.

The Motability Scheme provides affordable motoring to more than 600,000 disabled customers and their families. More details are available at motability.co.uk/thebigevent.

Drug driving up over two years

DRUG-DRIVING offences in the West Midlands have more than doubled in just two years, according to new research.

A total of 1,231 drivers were charged with driving under the influence of drugs in 2017, up from 533 in 2015.

This includes consumption of illegal, prescription and over-the-counter drugs, which could have an impact on a motorist's ability to drive, such as chlorphenamine, hydroxyzine or promethazine – all types of antihistamines to curb symptoms of hay fever.

In total, more than 6,300 UK drivers have been caught under the influence of drugs in 2017.

Investment brings jobs to the region

OVERSEAS firms pumping money into West Midlands businesses helped create more than 9,400 jobs last year, new figures reveal.

Despite fears over the impact of Brexit talks, the latest figures from the Department for International Trade show increasing numbers of new projects involving foreign direct investment, or FDI.

There were 171 new projects across the region last year – the most for three years, bringing in 9,424 jobs.

Baggies' Bob tees up top golf prize

FORMER Baggies goalkeeper Bob Ward won a charity golf day made up of ex-players. Mr Ward, who made 10 appearances for West Bromwich Albion from 1973 to 1977, took part in the annual golf day at Walsall Golf Club.

It was organised by the West Bromwich Albion Former Players Association. The team winner was one made up of workers at CPC Civils Ltd in Solihull.

Send your prom prints – and princesses

THE school discos of our yesteryear are well and truly assigned to the history books for the modern generation.

When school's out for students today they do not head for the hall in jeans and T-shirt to enjoy warm pop and a 'funky' teacher hitting the decks. Instead, they put on their ballgowns and black tie glamour for a night to remember – the school prom.

Dress hunting is a serious business

as all girls want to be the belle of the ball. And it's not just about dressing to impress. Transport is almost as important as youngsters strive to make the biggest impression.

So how much is this fairytale once-in-a-lifetime evening likely to set parents back? Well latest figures suggest we will spend an average of £500 on a daughter for prom night – and many will spend that on the dress alone. But

with a tear in their eye and proudly clicking away with the camera, most parents will no doubt think it is money well spent.

Send us your pictures from these milestone events and we will carry as many as possible in the paper.

Email your picture with names of those in the snapshot as well as details of the school and where the event was to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk



Transport is almost as important

Quirky display marks a medical milestone

By Charlotte Callar

A QUIRKY collection of medical equipment from the 1800s is on display to mark 70 years of the NHS.

From camphorated oil used to treat inflammation to oxygen tubes designed to look like glasses, the artefacts are made up of items from historian and former nurse Roy Stallard.

The avid collector has a display in the Heart and Lung Centre at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton for visitors to see, set up to mark the 70th anniversary of the NHS.

Among the display, there is a bedpan, enema set, ear syringe, thermometer and more, along with black and white photographs that provide a look into healthcare in the 1800s. There will also be a map on display to show where the current nurses come from in the world.

Legacy

There are two display units which will open from noon until 2pm for visitors to view. In a couple of months, this will later be expanded into a permanent display with 300 artefacts. He said: "I have a lot of pride in the NHS, it is an underfunded but wonderful institution."

"The hospital approached me and said they are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the NHS and asked if I would like to do something."

"This provides a legacy of instruments from the early 1800s which I have collected over the years because I find them fascinating."

The 84-year-old started training as a nurse as part of the medical corps for his national service in Germany in 1952. After two years with the Royal Army Medical Corps's military hospital, he left and landed the job at the Royal in 1954 to train.



There are different photographs of nurses at the Royal Hospital, Wolverhampton



Roy Stallard with an 1848 nurses water jug



Nebulisers



Children's oxygen tubes designed to look like spectacles



An early bedpan



An early enema

Brutal bully is sent to prison for 22 months

A 'BRUTAL bully' with a history of violence against women has been jailed for 22 months for beating up his girlfriend.

Jason Kinsey, aged 34, had been drinking all day on May 28 when he launched the attack on May 28, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Kinsey ran at the woman while her back was turned and kicked her legs from under her, sending her crashing to the floor. She suffered facial injuries.

The following day he attacked her again, this time while the victim was at his father's home in Himley Road, Dudley.

Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting, said Kinsey flicked a burning cigarette at the woman before grabbing a knife, which he repeatedly plunged into the wall beside her. He then spat at her.

Drunken

Kinsey, from Duke Street, Gornal, had 27 previous convictions involving 51 separate offences which included a drunken attack on a former partner. He had also been convicted of a stabbing.

Mrs Kam Shergill, defending, said: "This had been a short-lived, volatile relationship during which there was a lot of arguing and drinking. He could have handled the situation better. He accepts that the relationship is over."

Kinsey pleaded guilty to assault and criminal damage and was jailed for a total of one year ten months. Judge Barry Berlin told him: "You are a brutal bully."

Kinsey was also made the subject of a restraining order banning any contact with the victim or his father.

Stour ale will help river to improve

A NEW beer being brewed in Lye will help raise funds for a project to improve the River Stour.

Sadler's Brewery is producing Salmon in the Stour, a bitter made with Worcestershire and Herefordshire hops. For each cask ordered £10 will be donated to the project to improve the River Stour, which flows through the Black Country.

The project has been set up to tackle water quality and litter whilst improving access for people and enhancing habitats so wildlife like otters and salmon can thrive.

Chris Sadler, managing director of Sadler's Brewery, said: "Our brewery is right on the River Stour. Sadler's, along with many other local businesses, rely on it. Salmon in the Stour is a great project."

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Quad biker jobs face on-the-spot £100 fines

ON the spot fines of £100 could be dished out to yobs tearing around on quad bikes in nature reserves and parks in Dudley.

Dudley Council is proposing the creation of a Public Spaces Protection Order after receiving a complaints about quad bikes causing a nuisance on green spaces across the borough. Problems have been reported at Fens Pool Nature Reserve, Mullet Park, Barrow Hill Nature Reserve, Russells Hall, Buckpool Nature Reserve, Woodside Park and Marsh Park.

The move has been supported by police and would give both police officers and council officers the power to issue fixed penalty notices of up to £100 for those caught using an unauthorised motorised vehicle on any of the sites affected. Failure to pay the notice may lead to prosecution, which could result in a fine of up to £1,000.

Public open spaces will also be covered at Milking Bank, Pensnett Technical College, Lapwood Avenue/Ketley fields and Pheasant Street.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environment, said: "If it goes ahead, it will give the police and council officers new enforcement powers to crack down on people who spoil the tranquillity of green spaces and risk the safety of others by irresponsibly using motor vehicles."

The consultation via dudley.gov.uk is until 9am on July 20.

Getting ready for a funky weekend

THE Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival at Birmingham this weekend has sold out the Saturday concert of its three day residency at Birmingham's Moseley Park.

Saturday's line up featuring Lack of Afro, Birmingham's own Kezia, top funk DJ and TV star Craig Charles, and many others including veteran soul singer Candi Staton topping the bill, has proven a big draw.

Tickets are also selling fast for tomorrow's (Friday's) bill topped by reggae legend Jimmy Cliff, while Sunday's line-up includes disco favourites Sister Sledge alongside jazz hero Roy Ayres and the late James Brown's funky trombonist Fred Wesley with the New JBs, among others. Find out more at mostlyjazz.co.uk website.

Knife found in alley

A LARGE knife was found in an alley in Dudley. The 10-inch blade was discovered by police in Kates Hill on June 25. Councillor Shaukat Ali said knives had to be tackled so people felt safe on the streets.

MP welcomes homes at old college site



Stourbridge MP Margot James

STOURBRIDGE MP Margot James has welcomed plans to build homes on a disused former college site which has been blighted by vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Persimmon Homes has submitted an application to build 62 homes on the derelict Longlands School site in Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge.

The site has been empty since Birmingham Metropolitan College closed the Stourbridge College campus at the old school site in 2011.

The buildings, in a residential area, have been plagued by fires and other

anti-social behaviour since then, including a major blaze two years ago.

The Conservative MP has welcomed the fresh proposals and has also called on Dudley Council to ensure that the green space adjacent to the site is brought back into community use.

She said: "I welcome this news, which has been a long time coming. The development would see the building of much-needed homes in our area, including affordable homes, and solve issues of anti-social behaviour at the site."

"A full public consultation will be

conducted and I have been pressing Persimmon Homes to engage with the community during this process. I will also chair a public meeting to allow local residents to come and meet the developers and discuss these plans.

"I know residents are concerned about green space, so I call on the council to ensure that the land between the former school site and Albert Street is maintained for the benefit of the community."

"I will be working to ensure any development will contribute towards this aim."

Drinking pool water left woman in coma

A NURSE has been suspended after a woman in her care drank water from a swimming pool in Dudley, leaving her with serious brain injuries.

The 22-year-old, who has the mental age of a young child, would drink water 'excessively' and was unable to tell the difference between drinking water and water in the pool.

Nurse Carole Halstead was chatting to a colleague as the woman drank from the pool at Dudley Leisure Centre, a Nursing and Midwifery Council disciplinary hearing was told.

The woman fell into a coma after vomiting. Doctors said her life expectancy was significantly reduced and she was totally dependent on carers.

Freetime Care Services, of which Mrs Halstead is a director, expressed 'deep remorse' after the incident in July 2014. However, it said Mrs Halstead was considering appealing.

Warned

The mother said she warned the carer three times to limit her then teenaged daughter's session to 10 minutes because of her habit of drinking the pool water. Mrs Halstead was seen chatting as the woman drank the pool water during a session claimed to last 40 minutes.

A lifeguard said the nurse and a colleague told the woman not to drink the water but carried on talking to each other when she continued to drink it after ceasing briefly.

Mrs Halstead denied being told about the 10-minute rule but admitted not preparing an adequate risk assessment.

The panel found she had failed to prevent the woman consuming too much much water and failed to limit pool time to 10 minutes. The panel suspended the nurse of 24 years for 12 months.

Halesowen-based Freetime Care Services said: "Freetime and Carole Halstead would like to express their sincere apologies to the family. Freetime is taking every step possible to improve their processes."

Sue takes on India via bicycle



Getting ready for a mammoth charity bike ride through India later this year is fundraiser Sue Harris, of Lye

SUE Harris cycled across Brazil in October last years, raising thousands for a cancer charity, and now the 69-year-old, from Lye, will be cycling in India to raise funds for Women V Cancer.

Mrs Harris raised £4,500 for the charity in 2017, now hopes to raise a further £3,500 by joining a

group on a fundraising mission to the subcontinent. The campaign hits close to home for Mrs Harris, whose mother Hilda Hickey had stomach cancer, but died due to unrelated issues aged 42.

Mrs Harris will ride an average 50 miles a day through New Delhi, Agra and Rajasthan in November.

Mrs Harris is urging people to attend a charity race night at the Quality Hotel in Dudley, tomorrow (Friday) for Women V Cancer.

Tickets priced at £5 are available from Mrs Harris on 07870 546843. Go to justgiving.com/fundraising/sue-harris18 to donate.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Names to change at four schools

THE names of four Dudley secondary schools will be changed from September. The Dudley Academies Trust has announced the changes to names which have been part of the borough for decades.

Castle High will become St James Academy, High Arcal will change to the Beacon Hill Academy, Hillcrest will be known as The Link Academy and Holly Hall will switch to the Pegasus Academy.

The trust said parents would be able to get a free blazer and tie featuring the new logos and names but other items of uniform would have to be bought.

Councillor gets on board at airport

A SENIOR Dudley councillor has landed a new role after being appointed to the board of directors for Birmingham Airport.

Councillor Steve Clark, who is cabinet member for finance at Dudley Council, will take up his new position immediately, in addition to his current duties.

Officials at the airport are currently looking to map out a 30 year strategy to cope with the expected growth in passenger numbers, thought it may face a challenge now Heathrow has got the green light for a third runway.

Time to be-gin again at town hall

THE Just Gin Show is returning to Stourbridge Town Hall later this month.

The event organised by Stourbridge wine and spirits business Nickolls & Perks is being held from 11am to 8pm on July 28.

It will be the third and biggest show so far celebrating the much-loved spirit, which has become fashionable again with many producers creating new styles and flavours of gin. There will be a chance to sample a wide range of gins, chat to distillers and attend master classes. Tickets £20.

Lego brick show will be helping hospital

THE Black Country Brick Show is coming to Brierley Hill Civic Hall to delight Lego fans.

The event on September 2, from 10am to 4pm, is billed as the largest amateur Lego show in the region.

The event will also be raising money for Birmingham Children's Hospital and will feature work from master builders all over the UK.

Tickets are £4 and free for the those aged under three.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



Heatwave? Time to call the winter warmer line

EXCUSE the low standard of photography. Unfortunately the blistering sunshine caused by the longest heatwave since 1976 meant there was a lot of reflective glare in the windows of Dudley Council's offices when I took this picture.

Anyway, if you can't see it clearly, it is a poster warning about the dangers of living in a cold home. Apparently it's bad for your health, with children particularly at risk of bronchitis, asthma and mental health problems. It's so bad that the council has set up a winter warmth hotline. If you are shivering in your freezing home this week, don't hesitate to dial 01384 817086. That's local government for you. On the ball as ever.



Window poster

JOHN Sparry, the popular Black Country historian, broadcaster and raconteur, has written a book about some of the interesting characters from his old school, King Edward VI Grammar, in Stourbridge. He certainly has plenty of material. While the book focuses largely on literary figures, the father of the modern dictionary, Samuel Johnson, writers Bob Adey and David Gray, as well as the cartoonist Paul Sellers, former pupils include Battle of Britain hero Mike Cooper-Slipper, actor Anthony Bate, and rock star Robert Plant. Our school days invariably leave a big impression on our lives. Which is why I was saddened to learn that my old school, High Arcal in Dudley, is to change its name to Beacon Hill Academy. Now while my old school hardly compares with King Ed – founded in 1961 rather than 1552, and its notable alumni limited to a couple of politicians and a diplomat – the High Arcal name has served it perfectly well for 57 years, so why change it now? Even more depressingly, the old Dudley Grammar School, which traces its history back to 1452, is changing its name for the second time in less than 30 years. Renamed Castle High School in 1989, it will now be St James's Academy. The former Willenhall Comprehensive a few years ago changed its name to the funkier E-Act Academy. Last year it received a less-than-glowing Ofsted report, in no small part down to the fact that its pupils threw food at the inspectors. Good to know rebranding did the trick.

Water, water everywhere...but for how long?



Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer – old pals act with a different angle



Nye Bevan – as Britain marks 70 years of his NHS, we stand on the threshold of Brexit



John Cleese during his Monty Python heyday, but would he get the gig on today's BBC?

Sting in the tale of a British heatwave

THE worms may be shrivelling and the frogs dehydrating but one species is having a vintage year. I give you the horse fly, that drab little lover of human flesh. A couple of days ago one drove its pointy thing deep into my knee. From past experience this will create a scab, to be prodded and picked for months to come and providing harmless entertainment as the nights draw in. A horse-fly bite, the gift that keeps on giving.

I CANNOT be the only one genuinely surprised that there is not a nationwide hosepipe ban. It's like the savannah out there.

SAD to see so many sufferers attending the National Amnesia Day march in London. There were about 100,000 of them, all calling for a "People's Vote," having entirely forgotten we had it two years ago. Poor devils.

IT'S always good to see old friends having a laugh, as Bob Mortimer and Paul Whitehouse do in Gone Fishing (BBC2). And yet for outsiders the old mystery of coarse fishing is as perplexing as ever. You spend hours catching the fish and taking it out of the water. Then you put it back in again. Hmm.

THERE is life beyond London and I bet many of us on the blasted heath we call the provinces are puzzled at the time, money and energy spent on the future of Heathrow. How many Brits actually use the place? Since the 1970s I have flown all over the world on dozens of occasions for business, holidays and with the

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



military but I doubt if I've used Heathrow more than two or three times. The UK has lots of other places where airliners can take off and land perfectly well, so why this obsession with cramming so many eggs into one basket?

WHITEHALL has decided not to build five new female prisons but to erect much cheaper "residential centres" instead. This reflects a view deeply held in the criminal-justice system, that men are evil but women just have syndromes. Ironically, the announcement of the new facilities came the day after Sabrina Kouiser and her boyfriend were jailed for life at the Old Bailey for the murder, after 12 days of "pitiless" torture, of their au pair. They burned the body in their garden. Pure evil may be rarer among females than males but it undeniably exists and should be locked away for years, not in some cosy semi-hotel but behind the iron bars of a good, old-fashioned jail.

BY pure chance, the struggle to get out of the clutches of the European Union coincides with events to mark the 70th anniversary of Britain embracing the National Health Service. The NHS was a step into the unknown. It divided the nation. It was opposed by many "experts" who backed down only when Nye Bevan famously

"stuffed their mouths with gold." The result, in global terms, is a middling sort of health service which is not terribly expensive and is good in some parts, but poor in others. We are supposed to be very proud of it, yet we all have our horror stories about it. But on balance we're glad we took the step into the NHS. And I dare say Brexit will be much the same. Not perfect but better than what we had before.

POSTERS for a pub beer and gin festival remind me how popular gin has become recently. On holiday, I couldn't help noticing that the brilliant little village store in Corfe Castle boasts of having 100 brands of gin. This may answer an old question: what do folk in sleepy holiday villages do during the long, dark winters?

IS he having a laugh? Head of BBC Comedy Shane Allen says the Monty Python team would not make it on the Beeb today because they are 'six Oxbridge white blokes'. But I can't recall a time when humour has been so dominated by upmarket white performers. Stand-up comedy, once the preserve of working-class comics, is now the happy hunting ground of privately-educated stars. A study of 42 episodes of Have I Got News For You (BBC) revealed that all but one of the guests had been to private schools. Maybe things are changing but I bet if John Cleese, Eric Idle, Michael Palin and the rest of the Pythons graduated from uni tomorrow, they'd be snapped up by today's comedy producers because, whatever we may think about privilege, posh is still popular.

TALKING POINT



Upwardly mobile pupil gets top marks

THE name Andreea-Denisa Ciubotaru is hardly one that rolls off the tongue. However, the teenager should be commended.

Regular Talking Point readers may recall a colleague's view on mobile phone use around the dining table, making the point that social time was disrupted by people checking for messages, sending texts or using Facebook, for example, when conversation should be flowing between friends or family.

So it is heartening to hear 16-year-old Andreea-Denisa willingly go without her mobile phone during class time. The schoolgirl, from Barking, asked her headteacher to put her iPhone in the school safe so she could study for exams without being distracted by selfies. The device spent a month locked away and the move looked to have paid off with her GCSE grades predicted to rise from a C to an A. She was quoted as saying: "Everyone knows how addictive phones can be. I've told all my friends to get rid of theirs."

It comes as the head of schools' regulatory body Ofsted backed headteachers who ban phones in class, citing their use as being responsible for unruly behaviour.

Amanda Spielman says the use of smartphones in the classroom is 'dubious' at best and is not convinced of the educational benefits of Snapchat and the like. Culture secretary Matt Hancock has backed the stance, admitting he admires school heads who prevent pupils from using phones all day.

There's no doubt that phones can have an educational appeal and can be a valuable revision tool. But out of school time and away from the desk, please.

Can any child really say they use mobiles sensibly while at school? I would argue that a primary school child's need for a phone is minimal anyway. Certainly, older children, who make their own way to and from school, or who may need to stay behind, would require them to keep in touch with parents.

But I do wonder what these children with their fancy gadgets do at break times. Probably texting or keeping up to date with social media instead of properly interacting with their friends like we did.

It's no coincidence that even Silicon Valley executives send their children to technology-free schools, while Bill Gates and Steve Jobs limited screen time for their own children knowing how addictive they could be. Schools in this country should take heed and keep phones out of the classroom.

MARK SHIPP

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We need help fighting this deadly disease

NOT everyone has heard of mesothelioma. It's a deadly cancer caused by exposure to asbestos. It affects the lungs or the lining of the abdomen. It takes a long time to develop.

My son, Royston Shipley, was diagnosed aged 51 with mesothelioma in 2010. He had apparently been exposed to deadly asbestos fibres whilst working as an electrical engineer or from his time spent in the Royal Navy. At the time there was no treatment or hope and he was simply told to spend quality time with his family.

The UK has the highest death rate

from mesothelioma in the world and the World Health Organisation estimates that 125 million people around the world are annually exposed to asbestos in the workplace. Around 100,000 workers die each year from asbestos-related disease.

We at Asbestos Related Conditions Allied-Industrial Diseases (ARCADE) are passionate about raising awareness and funds to help research new medicines and we are appealing for volunteers to help in our one and only shop.

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daily rota of two in the mornings and two in the afternoons. We need cheery volunteers to help sort donations, steaming and arranging clothes, maybe pricing and selling items.

From our shop and events we raise money for Mesothelioma UK, and Asbestos Support Central England. If there is anyone who would enjoy helping us, please call on 01384 457879 or call into our shop at 6 and 8 New Street, Dudley.

MARY LAW
ARCADE
Dudley

Bid to find family of RAF pilot

I wonder if your readers can help me trace any living relatives of Kenneth Rowland Wainwright. He was a sergeant in the RAF during World War Two, and the pilot of a Whitley bomber from RAF Topcliffe. The crew all died when the aircraft was shot down over Holland on the night of June 13, 1941.

We know that he was from Toronto, Canada, and his father was Job Henry Wainwright. Online research discloses that the Wainwright family were from the Stafford, Sedgley, Stourbridge and Dudley areas.

Another of the crew was my uncle, Geoffrey Vivian Heslop, and my family and I have been researching his life and particularly his RAF career. We have found many interesting facts relating to the crew's last mission and would like to share them with Kenneth Wainwright's close family. I can be contacted on jfrankpitt@gmail.com

MRS JENNY FRANKPITT
Axbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

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Poor roads and big trucks are to blame

WHEN I was young and indeed when I first started driving, I don't remember any potholes at all.

Could the problem be with the way roads are made nowadays? Also, the vehicles using the roads nowadays certainly do not help the situation. In those days of rigid, the most number of axles in general was four. Compare that to the articles now using the roads with up to nine axles and scrubbing the road surfaces.

Is there a simple solution to the problem? I think not as we consumers are feeding the need for these sort of trucks. Perhaps an answer would be to get more goods moved by rail, but where are the rail lines anymore?

LEN HALES
Cradley Heath

Fresh view on homes for elderly

IN response to Mr C Lloyd from last week's Letters, not all care homes should be labelled the same.

I attended the relaunch at Myles Court in Brierley Hill where the not-for-profit owners have invested a lot of time and money in ensuring the Court is a pleasant and welcoming place to live.

Speaking with the residents it was very clear that most had chosen to live there and were happy to speak to anyone about how much they appreciated the managers and all staff.

Housing and Care 21 puts every bit of profit back into the improvements needed to look after an ageing population.

Hopefully the old fashioned concept where the elderly are wheeled into a room all day in front of a TV and then go back to their room only at night can be part of the past soon with the help of businesses.

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Patients facing hospital delays but the situation is improving

NEARLY 250 emergency patients arriving in ambulances at Russells Hall Hospital were left waiting more than half an hour to be seen.

Figures reveal that a total of 240 patients were left waiting at the Dudley hospital for more than 30 minutes in April – with nine waiting for over an hour.

Despite still not hitting targets, the trust has made an improvement since the figures for March, when 288 people were waiting more than 30 minutes. Then 35 people were forced to wait for more than an hour.

Carillion job losses now reach 2,400

THE number of workers losing their jobs following the collapse of Wolverhampton-based construction giant Carillion has topped 2,400.

The Official Receiver reported that a further 14 employees have transferred to new suppliers over the past week, taking the total of those finding other work to 12,338 – 68 per cent of the workforce working for the engineering and services group when it went into compulsory liquidation in January.

A further 28 staff will be leaving the business this week, taking the number of redundancies to 2,403. Almost 1,250 employees have left during the liquidation through finding new jobs, retirement or other reasons. The update said 2,100 employees are currently retained to enable Carillion to deliver its remaining services.

The Government sets a 15 minute target for patient handovers. The improvement, with 48 fewer breaches, has been hailed as encouraging.

Dudley councillor Rachel Harris said: "It is heartening to see a step in the right direction. Clearly there is more work and support that the trust needs to continue on this journey of improving handover times."

Trust bosses vowed to continue to work on improving their performance. Karen Kelly, chief operating officer at Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We do not leave any patient waiting inside an ambulance. Our teams at the Dudley Group are working very hard to ensure patients who arrive by ambulance are seen and assessed then handed over as quickly and efficiently as possible."

"We have relocated our ambulance triage area so that we have the flexibility to increase the number of cubicles, as required. At times, this flexibility due to staffing proves extremely challenging. However, we will continue to work with our staff and West Midlands Ambulance Service to improve this performance further."

Countryside fire warning after Kinver blaze



Firefighters used hoses and beaters to tackle a fire on Kinver Edge. Picture: Staffordshire Fire Service

A LARGE grass fire was sparked at beauty spot Kinver Edge last week as the continuing summer heatwave causes more concern over fires.

The National Trust site near Stourbridge has warned visitors against barbecues, campfires and discarding cigarettes.

Alerts have been issued across the country due to the hot and dry conditions.

Firefighters from the West Midlands

have already been called in to help colleagues in the north tackle major moor fires in Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

Crews tackled the Kinver fire over an area measuring 320ft by 160ft on June 27. Staffordshire fire crews joined West Midlands colleagues at the site off Kingsford Lane as a total of six crews arrived including specialist teams from Cannock fire station. They joined crews from Wombourne, Stour-

bridge, Brierley Hill, Haden Cross and Dudley. Firefighters used two hoses to try and douse the flames and beaters to stop the spread.

Station Commander Steve Andrews said: "We have been experiencing dry, warm weather and it is only natural to want to go outdoors and enjoy it with family and friends but it is also important to stay fire aware, as every year fire destroys thousands of acres of countryside and wildlife habitats."

One-way road system during resurfacing

A STRETCH of a busy Black Country road will be made temporarily one-way next month to allow resurfacing work to take place.

Carriageway resurfacing work is set to take place in Hagley Road, Stourbridge, between Glasshouse Hill and Worcester Lane.

In order to carry out essential work, this section of Hagley Road will become one-way southbound, away from Stourbridge town centre. The work will take place July 12 to 13 and July 16 to 19, from 9.30am to 3pm each day. Two-way flow will be reinstated when work is finished each day.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "This is an essential piece of work on a well-used road, which is why we're looking to put this one-way system in place when traffic flow is lighter, between 9.30am and 3pm each day. We hope to minimise disruption to motorists, and ask road users to bear with us during the work."

Letters will be going out to affected residents and businesses.

Signage will also be going up to advise motorists. Homes and businesses will be accessible, except when work is being undertaken on the immediate entrances to businesses.

Access to frontages will be maintained where safe to do so.

£455k price tag on property with flats

A LARGE property in Stourbridge town centre is up for auction with a guide price of more than £450,000.

The 14-room house of separate flats off Enville Street, Stourbridge, has been listed for a guide price of £455,000 by SDL Auctions.

It will be for sale at Aston Villa FC on July 18.

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Ryan made us proud and he deserves justice

HE was a young, ambitious businessman who had his whole life ahead of him.

Ryan Passey had his family, girlfriend, friends, his own business and money saved for a home of his own.

But the 24-year-old's life was tragically cut short during a night out with friends in Stourbridge last August.

What exactly happened in Chicago's nightclub is still a mystery. But what is known is that there was a fracas and Ryan suffered a fatal wound to the chest.

A funeral service was held at St James's Church in Wollaston, Stourbridge. Hundreds turned out, including many of his former teammates from Stourbridge and Wrens Nest football clubs.

Tributes

Touching tributes were made before a solemn gathering at the Raven Pub, in Brierley Hill – a pub Ryan went to on the night he died.

Speaking from her home in Brierley Hill, Gillian Taylor, aged 52, said: "You just loved being in his company, you were in awe of him, he was laughing and smiling, always joking. Everyone he spoke to he made friends with – you couldn't ask for a better child. He saved too, he was going to buy his own house. He never bought any trouble."

Ryan's step-father Phil, 51, said: "A lot of people didn't even know Ryan, but the amount of love that's been shown has been overwhelming, it's that which has kept us all going." Ryan's father Ada, 54, said: "Ryan was so popular, he had so many friends, it has helped us all pull together."

Following Ryan's death, 19-year-old Kobe Murray was arrested and later



Family campaign – Ada, Gill and Phil with a photograph of Ryan

charged with murder and manslaughter. A two-week trial at Birmingham Crown Court took place in January. The jury found Mr Murray, of The Broadway, Dudley, not guilty of both charges. Mr Murray admitted stabbing Ryan but said it happened accidentally as he went to push him away. He said the knife belonged to a friend.

Since the ruling, the family has launched a campaign called Justice For Ryan. It is calling for a change in law to allow for victims or their fam-

ilies to challenge a jury's decision on acquittal. "We believe it is wrong how a person convicted can appeal, but then a victim cannot make an appeal" said Phil.

Stourbridge MP Margot James wrote to Attorney General Robert Buckland questioning the decision.

The family have launched a petition backing their campaign. If it gets 100,000 signatures, it will be debated in Parliament. See www.change.org/p/justice-for-ryan-ryan-s-law

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10 Festival honours the struggle for women's rights

Stourbridge Chronicle
Thursday, July 5, 2018

THE proud history of chainmaking in the Black Country will be celebrated this weekend.

The Chainmakers' Festival in Cradley Heath, which has been running for more than a decade, was inspired by the 1910 struggle for a minimum wage by the women chainmakers of the town, led by Mary Macarthur.

The event has the distinction of being the first trade festival dedicated to female trade unionists.

Eleanor Smith, MP for Wolverhampton South West, and Sarah Carpenter, the Unite union's head of health, will be amongst the guest speaker at the event on Saturday. It will also feature music, comedy, street theatre, stalls, children's activities and a fun fair.

Activities will be split across two sites, with activities taking place on Cradley Heath High Street, culminating in a Workers' Picnic in Mary Macarthur Gardens.

TUC Midlands' regional secretary Lee Barron said: "We are delighted that we have leading trade unionists and politicians joining us for the festival. This year is a special year as we mark 100 years of female suffrage.

"As ever, it is absolutely right that we celebrate the role of female trade unionists and to use events such as the Chainmakers' Festival to continue to raise awareness of the challenges facing women today."

Concert celebrates 100 years of vote

A COFFEE concert at a town centre Halesowen church will celebrate 100 years since women got the vote.

The Pankhurst Anthem will be performed as part of the concert in St John the Baptist Church in High Street on Saturday, July 21, at 10.15am.



Beach party for Jacy Blunt, aged four, and Lucy Gamage from Dudley



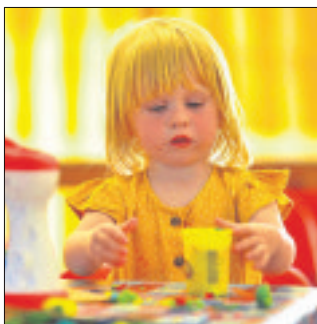
Having fun in the sun at Himley under-5s day



Punch & Judy man Ron Popple with Bobby Thompson and Lyndsey Griffiths



Having an 'a maze in' time is Vida McNeela, four, from Tipton



Craft fun for Amber Stanley from Oldbury



Donkey rides for Krishna Khanna, three, and Karmen Khanna, at Himley Hall

Fun in the sun for under-fives

THOUSANDS turned out to enjoy the sun and fun at the annual under 5s day on Friday at Himley Hall and Park.

It's estimated more than 3,000 children and their families attended

the popular Dudley Council event, which featured activities and entertainment for young children.

The park's specially brought in beach made a popular return with many children having bucket and spade fun building sandcastles

whilst elsewhere little ones laughed along in delight at the Punch and Judy Shows. The land train, donkey rides and children's funfair also went down well with youngsters.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member responsible for tourism,

said: "What a perfect day we've had for under 5s day. The sun shone and our younger visitors have enjoyed a fantastic day out in the beautiful grounds of Himley Hall.

"Thanks to everyone who came along to support the event and to all

the organisations that helped make the day such a success.

Other activities during the day included Baby & Toddler Sense, Music Bugs, Rugby Tots, Creation Station, Kung fu cubs, Moo music, Hartbeeps and Baby Ballet.

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Festival gees up more than £1,000 for charities

HUNDREDS of residents attended a popular community festival in Kingswinford and helped to raise £1,000 for a Black Country-based charity.

The High Acres Community Festival got in the Black Country Festival mood early on June 23 with a major fun day in aid of a charity helping the disabled.

Barbecue

The family event was held at The High Acres pub, on Madeley Road, and included a foam machine, surf rider, barbecue and live music.

Hosted by the High Acres Community Association, the group raised

£1,000 for their chosen charity of the year, Disability Action, which is based in Dudley.

Paul Brothwood, group chairman, said: "The day could not have gone any better."

"Hundreds of residents turned out for the family festival and the feedback has been the best yet."

"We managed to raise £1,000 for our chosen charity – Disability Action – plus a further £150 for the Acorns Hospice. In addition, we have enough funds to finance a summer event next year."

"We will start planning for next year's event shortly."



Organisers and supporters at the successful High Acres Community Festival held in Kingswinford

United faiths work recognised by PCC

A GROUP of religious leaders are to be recognised by police chiefs for their efforts in bringing together divided communities.

Faithful Friends, made up of Sikhs, Muslims and Christians, formed in 2015 in an attempt to unify people in the Smethwick area. Their work has been shortlisted for the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's Award.

Last year members began taking each other on a tour of their 'special spiritual places' in an attempt to build understanding between faiths. Locations ranged from a field in Cornwall to Amritsar in India, and even included a holiday camp. The group has also linked with schools via social media, filmed each visit and made videos that are now being shared in a bid to bring people together.

Commissioner David Jamieson said: "This project sums up everything that is good about the West Midlands"

Property prices have trebled in 18 years

PROPERTY prices in Dudley have almost trebled in the last 18 years, new figures have revealed.

A study has found the average price of a property in the borough went up 189 per cent, from £58,898 to £170,126 – a difference of £111,228.

It is a similar story across the Black Country. Price increases were even higher in Walsall, which has seen a 198 per cent increase since the year 2000 while in West Bromwich there has been a 204 per cent rise.

In Wolverhampton, prices have gone up 183 per cent, in Stafford, 189 per cent and in Cannock, 193 per cent.

Ron Darlington, partner at property auctioneer SDL Bigwood, said: "There is currently huge demand in the Black Country."

He said property prices had probably gone up faster in West Bromwich and Walsall due to first-time buyers from Birmingham and Solihull looking to neighbouring areas.

Concern

Dudley was ranked 79th out of 100 areas for property price increases in the study carried out by HouseSimple.com.

Southend, Bristol and Cambridge came top of the rankings. In Southend, property prices had increased by 291 per cent.

There is concern among some that the rising prices are forcing young people trying to get on the property ladder out of the market.

However Dudley Council set a target in 2014 for

By Alex Ross

16,127 homes to be built by 2026, including affordable homes. They include 237 properties on industrial land in Shaw Road, Dudley, 250 on land off Darkhouse Lane in Coseley and 124 off Deepdale Lane in Upper Gornal. The conversion of Dudley's Guest Hospital last year provided 157 homes toward the target.

Wolverhampton council aims to see 2,043 new homes built by 2026. Plans are in place to convert the former Telecom House and Crown House in the city centre into apartments. Tim Johnson, deputy chief executive at Wolverhampton council, said: "We have a target on homes we have to deliver which is why we're looking at former office blocks."

Helen Guy, chief officer at Citizens Advice Bureau in Wolverhampton, said she had seen 'growing numbers' of people in privately rented homes because they can't afford to buy. She said: "We want people to go into home ownership being clear that they understand their financial commitments."

Motability vehicles on display at NEC

THE country's biggest display of vehicles for disabled people will be on show at The Big Event at Birmingham's NEC.

Taking place tomorrow (Friday) and Saturday, The Big Event offers disabled motorists and their families the chance to investigate the Motability Scheme. Free to attend and with free parking, it is the Motability Scheme's flagship event this summer.

Visitors will be able to get behind the wheel alongside a driving instructor and test drive a range of vehicle. Guests can book a test drive on the day if they have their full driving licence. For the first time, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle passenger taster experiences will also be available. See the website motability.co.uk/thebigevent for more details.

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A car crashed into The Old Swan in March but the historic interior was saved



Baby Doris outside her family's shop in Bridgton



Ma Pardoe's granddaughter Ruth Tanner outside the old family shop in Bridgton

Where it all started for pub legend Ma Pardoe

THE family of local pub legend Ma Pardoe have been tracing their roots – visiting the birthplace of the famous landlady in her honour.

Doris Pardoe ran The Old Swan, better known as Ma Pardoes, in Netherton from 1931 until her death in 1984, aged 85.

Now family members have traced her history back to her birthplace in Bridgton, Cannock – and with the help of the local history society have learned more about their famous relative.

Her story began in Staffordshire in 1899 when she was born to Edward and Erena Jones, who owned and lived in a shop in Bridgton.

When Doris was 11 the family moved to the Black Country and entered the pub business.

In October 1918, when she was 19-years-old, Doris married Fredrick Pardoe and the pair lived at the Hollybush pub in Wolverhampton, which

MEMORY LANE

Report by Liam Keen

was one of a number of pubs they managed before moving to The Old Swan in 1931.

Her birthplace on North Street is now a business called Heat Tanning Studio but is still recognisable as the shop formally owned by the Jones family.

Recently Doris' granddaughter Ruth Tanner was given a tour around the area by members of Bridgton and District Local History Society.

She chatted to staff at the tanning studio, and owner, Hayley Childs, said: "I'm very proud, it's nice to hear the shop's history."

"I've heard lots of stories over the years about the different owners of the shop but never this story. I wasn't aware. It's nice to see the old photos and the front of the shop all those years ago. The original woodwork is still there."

"Doris obviously became very successful and well known in the Black Country, so it's really good for our community to have her originally based here. I've had the shop for 11 years now so it's great to see the history."

"The blue plaque is a lovely idea and a fitting tribute."

Derek Middleton, secretary of the history society, said: "It was an emotional visit. We're extremely proud to know we had a Black Country legend living in our village."

"We're planning to put up a blue plaque in honour of her. I used to travel over and drink in her pub and I just wish I knew at the time that I lived 20 yards away from where she was born."

The Old Swan is famous among real ale drinkers and brews its own beer on the premises. The popular pub was loved so much that when it came up for sale in 1985, shortly after Doris' death, the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) helped save it. It remains open to this day.



Famous landlady Doris Pardoe, known as 'Ma Pardoe'



Tanning assistant Billy-Jo Rowley with Ruth Tanner

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Located in the hills between the pretty market town of Welshpool and bustling Newtown, the park is an oasis of calm and tranquillity, but still within easy reach of the Midlands.

Set in more than 45-acres, it is an area of beautiful landscape. Sweeping hills, tranquil lakes and rivers and busy market towns all combine to create a region you will want to discover at leisure.

The park has a fantastic mix of outstanding facilities for all ages to enjoy. The fabulous heated indoor deck level pool and wellness suite includes a Jacuzzi spa, Swedish sauna and steam room. There is a fabulous bar and restaurant – the Gwernydd Arms – with a patio area, snooker room, pool and games room.

There is a bowling green, petanque court, nine-hole crazy golf, children's playground, football field, dog exercise area and laundry. They also have a well-equipped fitness suite, coffee shop, library, archery and cinema-style movie den.

The park grounds are immaculate with beautifully tended gardens, a stretch of river and two fishing pools. There are many local walks, wildlife in abundance, golf, cycling, canoeing and riding all nearby.

A day at the beach is also close at hand also, either 45 minutes to the picturesque fishing village of Aberdovey, or more traditional seaside holiday resorts like Barmouth, Aberystwyth, and the gorgeous sand



Gwernydd Hall park is an oasis of tranquillity within easy reach of the Midlands

dunes at Borth/Ynyslas take just over an hour. Historic Shrewsbury, a shopper's paradise, is only 34 miles from the park.

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Speeding driver is jailed after police find cocaine

A DRUG dealer who drove into trouble when spotted speeding by a police patrol in the early hours has been locked up for three years and three months.

The officers thought the motorist might be high on either drugs or drink and gave chase, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. But when father-of-five Aaron Botfield came to a standstill in Throne Road, Rowley Regis, it was discovered he was a cocaine dealer.

More cash machines disappear

MORE than five free-to-use cash machines are lost in the Black Country every month, it has emerged.

Experts are now warning that rural villagers may soon face difficulties obtaining money.

The figures come as part of the study into the impact of bank branches closures.

In November there were 1,440 cash dispensers in the Black Country, but now there are 1,408, according to consumer group Which?

Walsall saw the biggest rate drop, down from 333 to 318, followed by Dudley, 369 to 356 and Sandwell, 387 to 381. Wolverhampton saw a small increase, from 351 to 353.

In South Staffordshire the number dropped from 63 to 59, in Stafford from 123 to 116 while Cannock was up one from 104 to 105.

Mr Howard Searle prosecuting, said nine wraps of the drug – worth £180 on the street – were found in his car along with £598 cash and two mobile phones. One of these had 596 text messages linked to drug deals in the five months up to the night he was stopped in November 2017. There was also information indicating 550 deals had been organised in a single month.

The messages made it clear that the defendant – who had spent £120 on mobile phone top-ups during the proceeding week – was selling the cocaine for somebody else.

Banned

Botfield, of Regis Road, Rowley Regis, had also spent £3,300 in five months hiring different cars in a bid to evade police attention.

The 25-year-old was also driving whilst banned. He had 19 previous convictions involving 36 offences which including crimes of assault and possession of an offensive weapon.

Mr William Dudley, defending, said Botfield initially became involved with his drug dealer to service his own supply of cocaine.

Botfield admitted possession of cocaine with intent to supply and driving while disqualified. He was jailed and will be banned from driving for three years on release.

Walkers face heat to make dreams come true



Promise Dreams trustee Suresh Bawa, DJ Dicky Dodd and patron Steve Bull at Himley Cricket Club

IN an effort to make dreams come true for ill children, hundreds of people walked a gruelling nine miles in the intense heat from Himley Cricket Club to Wolverhampton Racecourse.

Promise Dreams' annual fundraiser walk took place on Sunday with participants aiming to raise money for the Wolverhampton-based charity that aims to make dreams become a reality for children with serious or terminal illnesses.

More than 500 people walked the course via Wombourne and the Penn Road in extreme conditions in the hope that they can improve on the impressive £30,000 haul from last year's walk.

Corporate partnership manager at Promise Dreams, Dan Smith, said: "It was brilliant, considering the weather. We normally wish for good weather but it was a tad too hot and it wound down earlier than expected after the

walk, but we're really chuffed with how it all went. It was absolutely brilliant.

"I want to thank our volunteer marshals who took their time to help out and stand in that heat, they were brilliant as always."

The national charity based at Stafford Road in Wolverhampton, is supported by Wolves legend Steve Bull, who is a patron and was at Saturday's event.

New chain seize pizza the action

A NEW pizza restaurant is set to open the first of a new chain at Merry Hill as part of a £100 million leisure investment at the shopping centre.

The PIZZASQR concept will open later this summer as owner Intu prepares to invest to replicate the successful leisure offer of its other popular locations around the UK.

PIZZASQR will sell artisanal square pizza slices and is on its way to becoming one of the biggest pizza chains in the country – with plans to open 100 stores in the next five years.

Davide Cason, operations manager at PIZZASQR, said: "Pizza doesn't need to be complicated. I am excited to introduce PIZZASQR – simple and delicious pizza as square slices.

"Our menu will combine the freshest ingredients, seasonal toppings and expert craftsmanship to create, based on authentic recipes from Rome, pizza everyone is going to love. But, pizza is only just a slice of it. Through the week, we will also serve freshly made sandwiches, soups, pastries and of course, authentic Italian coffee.

"Intu Merry Hill is a fantastic destination with enormous potential as a key dining location."

Centre bosses Intu plan to build a 180,000 square foot leisure extension at Merry Hill that will introduce more restaurants.

Helping Hands is opening in town

A NATIONAL care home provider has opened a new branch in Stourbridge. The new Helping Hands branch will officially open in High Street on Monday. The official opening will be by Councillor Nicolas Barlow, Dudley Council's cabinet member for adult social care, with Helping Hands chief executive Tim Lee.



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The Your Choice Bathrooms showroom where there are a huge range of styles and brands on show

has always been the key to us. "When you walk in thinking about the day ahead, you don't want to be surrounded by tired fixtures and fittings. We want you to choose Your Choice Bathrooms to help you."

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styles from traditional to more contemporary names such as Eastbrook, Bathrooms to Love, Hudson Reed, Triton and Vanity Hall.

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that is within your budget. A free and friendly, no-obligation quotation is always available in your home and if you decide to go ahead, the company's team of skilled fitters is able to take your ideas and designs and turn them into reality.

The team works hard to keep bathroom prices

as low as possible without compromising on quality, and aims to keep within the budget of retired, disabled and working families who make up 90 per cent of their customers.

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Attract more visitors by making your own birdbath



IT'S not just plants that thrive in gardens, birds love them – and they love them even more when there's a birdbath to visit.

Water helps keep a bird's body cool both from the inside and outside. Offering water in your garden will attract more birds than just those looking for food, since birds that would not normally visit feeders can be tempted by water features.

Birds fly to birdbaths for the water they need -- for drinking and for grooming – and while they are there they will hunt for the insects, worms, seeds and flower parts they like to eat.

In the process they will help aerate the soil, help tidy up dead plant material and help keep plants healthy as they devour pests.

The best birdbaths are normally shallow with sloping sides, rather than deep pools of water.

The shallow pitch lets smaller birds wade in, where they can stand up and clean their feathers instead of having to jump in.

Leave plenty of open space around the birdbath as well, so that birds can see any predators from far off. Also, place the birdbath near a perch of some sort, such as a small open tree or on a trellis or arbor. That lets birds scan the horizon from high up before swooping in to the bath.

Simplest

The simplest birdbath is a terracotta plant pot saucer with some small stones – and is very easy to make yourself.

Just grab a large terracotta plant pot and saucer, some all-purpose glue for outside use and some rounded stones (about the size of a plum).

Turn the pot upside down and scrub the base clean. Then apply a generous layer of waterproof glue to the base.

Place the saucer on the base of the pot, settling it into the glue.

Leave it for 24 hours to ensure that the glue dries thoroughly.

Place the birdbath in a suitable spot, add some stones so birds can perch to drink and then add some fresh, clean water.

The pebbles also provide an escape route for honeybees that are frequent visitors to bird baths as they need water to regulate temperature within the colony on hot summer days.

If pots and containers are just part of your outside space then here are some gardening tips for this month from the Royal Horticultural Society:

- Water tubs and plants, but be water-wise
- Hoe any sun loving weeds
- Place conservatory plants outside now that it is warm
- Deadhead plants to ensure continuous flowering
- Keep ponds topped up and clear of algae
- Order catalogues for next year's spring-flowering bulbs
- Give the lawn a quick-acting summer feed and mow regularly
- Give outdoor woodwork a lick of paint or preserver, while the weather is dry

Sara Milne
The Potted Garden

Payout plan for issues switching energy suppliers



Ofgem plans to compensate householders who have suffered problems switching energy suppliers

PLANS announced by the regulator Ofgem to compensate householders who have suffered problems switching energy suppliers have been welcomed.

"Any moves to help residents to reduce their bills are good news and long overdue," said green expert Ron Fox, of Noreus Ltd on University of Keele Science and Innovation Park.

Under the scheme companies, who make errors when customers want to switch, such as moving them to the wrong company or being too slow to send a final bill or taking too long to complete the move, will have to pay up to £60 in compensation.

Both the regulator and Ofgem have spent years encouraging people to switch suppliers to get a better energy deal. But research has shown many people don't bother because they are worried there will be problems or that they tried once before and it didn't work out.

More than five million electricity customers and four million gas customers swapped suppliers last year, but millions more, particularly the elderly, have never switched and are stuck on expensive standard tariffs.

Rob Salter-Church, interim head of consumers and markets at Ofgem, said the automatic compensation would help protect consumers and ensure suppliers get switches right first time.

His comments were supported by Mr Fox, who said those who had switched from a variable rate tariff to a fixed rate

deal would have saved about £376 a year. He encouraged householders to shop around for the cheapest energy deal now as he said it was so easy and particularly as British Gas, Npower and EDF had all put up their prices in the last couple of months.

Firstly, people should enter the tariff and energy usage from their most recent bill on a price comparison website which will suggest the cheapest supplier.

But Mr Fox warned that the lowest price may not always be the best after research by the consumer charity Citizens' Advice found that the bottom 15 places for the worst customer service all went to small companies.

He advised people thinking of moving to a new small provider to then look at three areas.

"Beware of companies who ask you to pay up front for a better deal – they may not have a big enough cash reserve," he said.

"Secondly, if the provider has a poor customer service record it may be struggling with rapid expansion. Finally, make sure the company gives both value for money and has a good trading record."

Meanwhile, for those looking for even more freedom from rising electricity and heating costs, Mr Fox recommended looking at renewable alternatives.

These include rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, which change energy from the sun into domestic electricity, and air source heat pumps.

Bargains can be found – but be wary of pitfalls

Report by Hannah Stephenson

SO, after perusing the very expensive plant sections in your local garden centre, you move on to the discount bench.

You'll often find an array of specimens much more suited to your budget.

But are they worth buying?

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU CHOOSE

Christine Walkden, resident gardening expert of The One Show and author of Christine Walkden's No-Nonsense Container Gardening, says you can bag some fantastic bargains, but you need to be aware of what may end up on the compost heap.

"Garden centres are now clearing their shelves of mainstream bedding and herbaceous plants to get ready for bulbs, which generally come in in August, and then for their Christmas stock," she says.

"If a plant is just reduced because they want to clear the benches, which at this time of year is often the case, you can pick up some real bargains."

As the season began so late this year, there are great bargains to be had, she adds.

SUMMER ANNUALS AT A SNIP

You can now purchase packs of summer annuals for a fraction of their original cost, as well as ready-made hanging baskets and containers, which if kept fed, watered and dead-headed, should last well into September.

CHECK PLANT HEALTH

But you need to check the plant's health before you buy, she warns.

"A lot of things are being reduced, but look carefully at what's being offered," she advises. "I would avoid anything soft, squidgy, obviously diseased or weak, the normal poor quality things."

"If the roots of discounted bedding plants are coming through the bottom of the tray, it's probably best to avoid them as they are likely to have been there a long time and may have been starved."

CONSIDER PERENNIALS WHICH HAVE FINISHED FLOWERING

Plants which are coming into flower or in full bloom are likely to be more expensive, while perennials and shrubs which have finished flowering may well be among the sale items.

"If perennials have just been chopped back and have a good root system, and the roots are white and fleshy, that's another bargain to be had," says Walkden. You can get all-round interest by going into your local garden centre on the same day every month and bagging a bargain, she adds.

WHAT ABOUT BULBS AND SEED POTATOES?

Recently, some centres have been selling off seed potatoes which should have ideally been planted earlier in the year.

Walkden advises: "You can plant seed potatoes until the end of June, while garden centres will be stocking autumn-flowering



Garden centres are full of enticing offers – but are they really worth it?



Acers are pricey – and there are cheaper alternatives

bulbs now – such as sternbergias and Crocus zonatus – which should be planted by late August.

"Bulbs are interesting because you can plant them totally out of season and they will just flower much later," she says.

"If the bulb is sound, with no softness, mould or disease on it and you haven't got round to buying them, then buy them."

"I know lots of people who plant their spring bulbs in December, because they

forget, and they'll just flower later."

CONSIDER CHEAPER VARIETIES

There are other ways to save money on garden centre plants. Some specimens may be more expensive than less popular varieties.

Acers, for example, can be extremely pricey, but some argue you can get the same effect with cheaper trees such as cherry or Amelanchier.

Lifting and dividing plants can also be



Give pots with roots protruding a miss

an economical way of increasing your stock and you can do this with many plants, from dainty-looking astrantia, to tropical-looking hostas, heleniums, rudbeckias and crocosmias.

Some clumps of bulbs will separate easily, to give you several healthy clumps to replant, while you may need to get a gardening knife to divide other tougher-rooted types like hostas. But leave this job until the plant is dormant, if you can.

Foundry group open new head office

THE new head office of Thomas Dudley has been officially opened.

Louise Dudley, widow of former chairman John Dudley and mother of group chief executive Martin Dudley, cut the ribbon at the Dudley foundry group's site in Birmingham New Road on Friday.

Black Country comedian Doreen

Tipton entertained guests and past and present staff of the bathroom products and iron castings manufacturer at the ceremony.

Work on the multi-million three-storey head office building began at the end of 2016 and was completed last year. The group had outgrown its existing offices, which dated from the

1970s, located at the main foundry site. The new state-of-the-art building includes a showroom and training facilities.

Thomas Dudley Foundry, which celebrates its centenary in 1920, won the award for best use of technology in last month's Express & Star Business Awards.

Gunman jailed after have-a-go hero is shot in the wrist

Park tribute to Bert Bissell



Nephew Colin Bissell next to the stone in Bert Bissell's memory

A FRIENDSHIP stone was unveiled in memory of Dudley peace campaigner Bert Bissell, who scaled Ben Nevis more than 100 times in a lifetime dedicated to the service of others.

The memorial stone was unveiled in Buffery Park on Saturday in memory of Mr Bissell, MBE, who first led a pilgrimage party from his Bible class to the summit of Ben Nevis on VJ Day in 1945.

The stone had stood in Vicar Street for many years but was recently refurbished and was unveiled at its new home by the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Taylor.

The event was organised by the Bert Bissell Memorial Society and Friends of Buffery Park. It will now sit alongside a board giving details of Mr Bissell's achievements.

Mr Bissell died 20 years ago, aged 96. He lived at Selborne Road and founded the Young Men's Bible Class, in Vicar Street. He was a probation officer and climbed Ben Nevis many times, constructing a Peace Cairn at its summit.

Ben Nevis has been climbed every year for five years by Dudley people keen to honour his legacy and raise money for charities. The next climb takes place on August 16.

A HOODED gunman who shot a man after bursting into a flat in Stourbridge has been jailed for more than ten years.

Jordan Dorrance opened fire as Zahir Munshi tried to rugby tackle the intruder who was threatening to rob the occupants, a judge heard.

The shot from the revolver shattered a bone in the wrist of the have-a-go hero who may suffer as a result for the rest of his life, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Mr Munshi landed on top of the 21-year-old and punched him until overcome by the pain of his own injury, explained Miss Laura Culley, prosecuting.

Two other people at the address in Vauxhall Road, Stourbridge - Anthony Bresnahan and Ricky Raza - took over the struggle to suppress Dorrance who bit several people in a failed bid to escape before police arrived to arrest him during the early hours of November 24 last year. The victims and gunman were all covered in blood when officers reached the scene, the court heard.

Mr Bresnahan had been ambushed by Dorrance while opening the security door to the flats following a phone call which claimed a friend was waiting outside. He was confronted by the hooded gunman who hit him in the face with the weapon before marching him to the flat and demanded money at gunpoint.

Dealing

Dorrance, who had no previous convictions, was on bail for drug dealing. He and Joseph Mason of Draycott Close, Warstones, Wolverhampton, were found with £2,300 worth of drugs and almost £500 cash when police searched them after stopping a BMW in Birches Barn Road, Bradmore, Wolverhampton, shortly after midnight on December 17 2016.

Mr Lee Masters, defending Dorrance from Enville Road, Warstones, said of the attempted robbery: "He is unable to explain what happened and why it happened."

Mr Ekwall Tiwana, said his client, Mason, had been forced to deal drugs to pay off a debt run up as a result of addiction.

Mason admitted possession of drugs with intent to supply and was jailed for two years six months. Dorrance, who was convicted of those offences after a trial but pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm, wounding, attempted robbery and assault during the more recent incident, was sent to prison for a total of ten-and-a-half years.

Adults can have fun at museums with new classes

A NEW and expanded museum programme for adults is to launch this summer.

Dudley Museum Service's 'Let's Do This' programme has taken the familiar adults at museums programme and added a range of classes, talks, reading groups and creative sessions for adults.

A new creative glass session allows participants to make something in fused

glass with a different artist or theme each month, starting with seascapes on July 7, Picasso faces on July 27 - and also covering cityscapes, aboriginal art, Dali, Manga and Clarice Cliff throughout July and August. Sessions run between 1pm and 2.30pm, cost £10 and must be booked in advance.

For more information call (01384) 812381 or (01384) 815571.

Leisure bosses get mental health 'first aid' training

ALL senior managers at a Black Country leisure trust have qualified as 'mental health first aiders'.

The managers at Sandwell Leisure Trust all recent undertook a two-day training course to help them identify, understand and help those who may be suffering from a mental health issue. Mark Wildman, SLT business and commercial manager, said: "Mental health awareness

and training is an increasingly important area for employers, so we think taking a proactive and positive approach is vital."

The course was delivered by Inter Wellbeing Ltd and helps employees develop skills and confidence to approach and support someone and guide a person towards the right support for recovery or successful management of symptoms.

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The Ticket

Sinatra and all that jazz for star Curtis

Back in the day, Curtis Stigers was the man with the flowing locks and the pin-up looks. The singer enjoyed a string of chart successes in the early 1990s, including the international smash hits *I Wonder Why* and *You're All That Matters To Me*.

And yet becoming part of the international jet set was something that didn't sit well. He was more interested in playing the music close to his heart – jazz and swing – than he was making a dent in the charts.

And so he began an alternative career. Curtis exited the arenas and stadiums into which he'd briefly been placed and started doing the rounds at jazz clubs and bars. That was 17 years ago and his jazzy versions of pop songs have made him ever-popular in the USA and Europe. These days, his records don't make the chart – and that's exactly how he likes it.

He's back on the road with a show that pays homage to the greatest of them all – Frank Sinatra – and will headline Birmingham's Town Hall on July 13 with a show called *Sinatra At The Sands*, in which he'll perform with The Ronnie Scott's Big Band.

Curtis will channel the hip, swinging chemistry of Frank Sinatra and the Count Basie Orchestra in celebration of the classic album *Sinatra at the Sands*. It follows the release last year of his latest album, *One More For The Road*, with the Danish Radio Big Band.

Not that Stigers will party like Ol' Blue Eyes after the show. "I'm old enough to know that I shouldn't have a drink of whisky to end the night. That's always been a downfall for me. The next day is a very bad day if I do that. If I'm going to have something strong, I'm going to start with it. Once I'm done with it, I'm a big fan of a nice glass of red wine, so I'd switch to that. It'd have to be red wine only because I'm too smart to hurt myself as badly as I did when I was young."

OUTSPOKEN

"Listen to me, children! Do not mix drinks at the end of the night. It seems like a great idea when they bring out a bottle of nice Scotch whisky but once they do that, you're in trouble."

Curtis is one of rock'n'roll's more cultured performers. A delightful raconteur and outspoken politico, his Twitter feed is one of the more entertaining that there is.

He frequently rails against the 'poison' of USA President Donald Trump and also tackles such commentators as Katie Hopkins in no-punches-pulled discourse.

"He's just a nightmare for everyone. I think in the long-run, even the people who support him will rue the day that they decided to vote for him. He doesn't care about anybody except himself. He's not about the country. He's not about the people he supposedly represents. He's about making money and getting attention. I don't think he's mentally stable either. We could probably talk about him for hours!"

Curtis's new Sinatra project is close to his heart. He is a huge fan of Sinatra at the Sands, which inspired his album with the Danish Radio Big Band.

"I flew over to rehearse with them for a day,

And we wonder why – Curtis Stigers is taking on Sinatra's hits



drank a couple of Danish beers and I sang a bunch of great material that I have known since I was a kid but hadn't sung as it never occurred to me to sing Sinatra. I've always kind of done my own thing. I had a ball, though. It was a riot.

"A few weeks later someone sent me an email with a link to the recordings for Danish radio, as it had gone out as a broadcast.

"And to be honest, I didn't even listen to it. It took me a couple of weeks to rediscover it. I threw it on when doing some work and I was really surprised by how fresh it sounded and how cool it sounded to hear me singing these songs and arrangements that Sinatra made so famous."

Curtis has led a remarkable life – coming face-to-face with rock excess and meeting his heroes along the way.

"It was wonderful at the time – but you can't spend your life

It's very easy to lose track of reality. They were great times . . .

like that. It's very easy to lose track of reality. They were great times and I got to perform in front of huge numbers of people and meet a lot of my heroes like Eric Clapton, Elton John and Prince. But I wouldn't want to be stuck in the back of a tour bus now – these days I like to keep it low key, it's better to connect to people in each of the place I travel to.

"Different things are important to me now I guess. I've seen plenty of people in my industry lose sight of what's real and what's not. I'd like to think that I have never been like that, I've always tried to keep a grip on what's important."

Andy Richardson

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Young Vic's The Jumper Factory



Emphasis on youth at Rep's theatre festival

More than 200 young people from across Europe will unite in Birmingham this summer for a celebration of youth theatre.

Over five days from July 30 to August 3, a total of 14 youth theatre companies will perform as part of For / With / By: Festival of European Youth Theatre at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

The aim of the festival is to raise awareness of youth theatre work, both in the UK and Europe, and also to celebrate incredible theatre made by young people aged 14 to 25.

The programme includes a broad range of plays from the classic, *Antigone*, to the topical *Windrush*-inspired, *The Place For Me*, with companies from across the UK and also Ireland, Poland and Spain.

Steve Ball, associate director for learning and participation at Birmingham Rep, said: "For / With / By is a celebration of the thousands of young people who take part in youth theatre groups every week across the UK and Europe. Here at The Rep we believe theatre and the chance to participate in high-quality drama activities should be open to every young person."

"Performing, learning and participating in theatre can have life-changing experiences and I think that during the festival you'll not only see some incredible theatre making, you'll also see young people having a real drive and passion for something they have chosen to be part of."

For further information about the shows see www.birmingham-rep.co.uk website.

Be moonstruck by the Lunar line-up



THE Lunar Festival near Birmingham offers an intimate alternative to the summer's mega music fests.

The capacity is 5,000 for the Lunar Festival, named after a group of Birmingham-based 18th century industrialists, philosophers and intellectuals, which is being held at a rural site near the Warwickshire village of Tanworth-in-Arden, after taking a year off in 2017.

Committed to staying small whilst thinking big, the 2018 edition of Lunar Festival is held over the weekend of July 27 to 29. The major music acts will be in action from

Friday to Sunday, following 'early settlers' day on Thursday.

Top of the bill on Friday is Amadou & Mariam, a Grammy-nominated duo from Mali, and the line up also includes the Go! Team, folk group The Unthanks with the songs of Molly Drake, a DJ set from Baement Jaxx and funky Welsh band Boy Azooga, plus others.

Goldfrapp, fronted by Alison Goldfrapp, pictured, headline on Saturday, plus electronic outfit Crazy P, Hookworms and 'Madchester' favourites A Guy Called Gerald, and more. Another eclectic line-up on Sunday is topped by new wave veterans The

Strangers, with support from Malian band Songhoy Blues, singer-songwriter Jane Weaver, and DJ Mark Radcliffe's Galleon Blast.

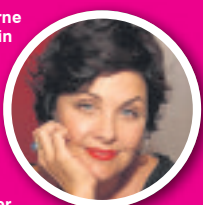
"Lunar is 100 per cent dedicated to celebrating the wonderful community of music and art lovers that have supported the festival to date, and we look forward to welcoming friends old and new to this year's edition," said the festival's John Fell.

There is a range of prices with camping and without, and special deals for students and NHS workers. For more information see www.lunarfestival.co.uk website.

Fenn-tastic event for Twin Peaks fans

Sherilyn Fenn, Audrey Horne in cult 1990s TV series *Twin Peaks* and its sequel *Twin Peaks: The Return*, is the first special guest announced for MCM Birmingham Comic Con at the NEC on November 24 and 25.

While Fenn has an array of TV and film credits to her name, from *Gilmore Girls* to the controversial *Boxing Helena*, the Detroit-born actor is best known as Audrey in *David Lynch* and *Mark Frost's* surreal detective drama *Twin Peaks*. See www.mcmcomiccon.com/birmingham/2018



Hip-hop and pop at Solihull Summer Fest

This year's Solihull Summer Fest is set to be the best yet with a line-up that includes pop legends Busted, Sister Sledge, Blue and 10cc - plus latest X-factor winners, Rak-Su. Now in its third year, thousands at Tudor Grange Park over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The Saturday (August 25) line-up includes disco sensations Sister Sledge, 70s favourites 10cc and 'All Rise' boy band Blue. Also on the bill are X Factor hip-hop sensations Rak-Su, singer and Britain's Got Talent judge Alesha Dixon and Roland Gift from the Fine Young Cannibals. Sunday (August 26) includes the only confirmed gig of 2018 for Busted, plus 'America' hitmakers Razorlight, the Lightning Seeds, The Beat featuring Ranking Roger and The Dualers. Plus special guest rappers the Sugar Hill Gang. Visit www.solihullsummerfest.co.uk

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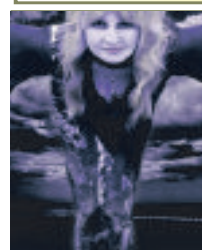
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The Island Pool is a classic country pub serving not only a high standard of food but great traditional ales.

A spokesman said: "We have to offer, a carvery with a choice freshly roasted meats accompanied by a wide variety of fresh locally sourced vegetables."

"Alongside our carvery, we have an extensive menu with a range of foods to suit any and every palate. We are proud to offer exquisite beef steaks, also sourced locally, and are all cooked to perfection."

"Sumptuous breakfast, tasty lunch and sexy dinners. Stop by for our varied menu and enjoy our farm to table concept."

The pub is open daily between Sunday and Friday, from 12pm and 8pm and Saturday from 12noon to 9pm.

Breakfast is available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 8.30am and 11am.

The spokesman added: "Whether it's brunch, lunch or dinner you're joining us for, call to reserve your table on (01562) 850311."



CHOICE



Jo Whaley

RHS Hampton Court Flower Show 2018 (BBC2, 9.30pm)
On the final day at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, Carol Klein will be revealing what to plant this weekend for instant results, Arit Anderson has some Hampton-inspired ideas for outside spaces, and Adam Frost explores how to create privacy in a garden. Plus, Toby Buckland meets the winner of Florist of the Year and Nick Bailey looks in detail at a cut-flower favourite, the lily. Introduced by Joe Swift and Jo Whaley.

BBC1

In the event of live football not being shown, the following schedule is subject to change.
6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Simply Nigella. (R) **12.00** BBC News. Weather. **12.15** Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker introduces live coverage of day six at the All England Club. **2.30** MOTD Live: FIFA World Cup 2018. Gary Lineker presents coverage of the third quarter-final (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.15** Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents further live coverage of day six. **6.10** BBC News.
6.20 Regional Programme.
6.30 MOTD Live: FIFA World Cup 2018. Spain or Russia v Croatia or Denmark (Kick-off 7.00pm). Gary Lineker presents coverage of the fourth quarter-final, which takes place at Fisht Stadium in Sochi, as the semi-final line-up is completed. The teams still left in the competition at this stage know they have a very strong chance of lifting the famous trophy, and the pressure will be on both countries to perform well here. If the expected results had occurred in the group stages and during last week's last-16 encounters, this match may well have been a mouthwatering clash between Spain and Argentina, but Jorge Sampaoli's side just scraped through in second place from their group, and met France in the second round a week ago. Fernando Hierro – who travelled to four World Cups as a defender for Spain – took over as manager just days before the start of the tournament following Julen Lopetegui's sacking, and guided his side to a memorable 3-3 draw with Portugal, a 1-0 victory over Iran and a 2-2 draw with Morocco in their group games. With commentary by Jonathan Pearce and Danny Murphy.
9.15 Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes fears her family is planning to send her to a nursing home, when in fact it is Spartacus the dog who is set to be sent away. Comedy, starring Brendan O'Carroll. (R)
9.45 BBC News. Weather. National Lottery Update.
10.05 Film: Avengers: Age of Ultron. (2015) Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Robert Downey Jr.
12.15 MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Replay. **2.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.40 Marrying Mum and Dad. **7.10** Officially Amazing Goes Bunkers. **7.40** The Dengineers. (R) **8.10** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. (R) **8.40** Deadly Dinosaurs with Steve Backshall. (R) **9.10** David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. (R) **9.30** Second Chance Summer: Tuscany. (R) **10.30** Athletics: Diamond League Lausanne Highlights. **11.30** Wimbledon 2018.
8.30 Today at Wimbledon. Clare Balding introduces highlights of the sixth day's play at SW19, where the line-up for the last 16 was set to be decided. The middle Saturday is always a special occasion at SW19 and the crowd on Centre Court last year were treated to the sight of Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic progressing to the fourth round with respective straight-set victories over Mischa Zverev and Ernests Gulbis, while Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga was dumped out of the tournament on Court Two against American Sam Querrey.
9.30 RHS Hampton Court Flower Show 2018. Carol Klein reveals what to plant for instant results. Arit Anderson has ideas for outside spaces, and Adam Frost explores how to create privacy in a garden. Last in the series.
10.00 Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Champs. In Absolutely Fabulous, Patsy and Edina were rarely seen without a glass of champagne in their hands. And it turns out their real-life counterparts, comedy collaborators and great friends Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders, also like nothing more than getting together to share a glass of something chilled and bubbly. Now the pair head across the channel to explore the Champagne region of France and find out how the tippie is made. Along the way, they also quiz each other about their lives, revealing previously unheard stories and anecdotes. (R)
11.00 Absolutely Fabulous. A new boyfriend boasting a selection of lost Beatles recordings makes Eddie think she has hit the big time. (R)
11.30 Film: Behind the Candelabra. (2013)
12.00 Film: Populaire. (2012) **3.05** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

In the event of live football not being shown, the following schedule is subject to change.
6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dingo Dana. (R) **6.50** Mission Employable. (R) **6.55** The Oddbods Show. (R) **7.05** Ninjago: Tournament of Elements. (R) **7.30** The Haunted Hathaways. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball on Saturday. **9.25** James Martin's American Adventure. **9.55** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **10.55** The Best of the Voice Worldwide. **11.55** ITV News. **12.00** ITV Racing: Live from Sandown. Coverage of today's races from Sandown Park and Haydock Park. **2.30** FIFA World Cup 2018. Coverage of the third quarter-final (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.15** Catchphrase. (R) **6.00** ITV News. Weather.
6.15 Regional Programme. Weather.
6.30 FIFA World Cup 2018. Spain or Russia v Croatia or Denmark (Kick-off 7.00pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the fourth quarter-final, which takes place at Fisht Stadium in Sochi, as the semi-final line-up is completed. The teams still left in the competition at this stage know they have a very strong chance of lifting the famous trophy, and the pressure will be on both countries to perform well here. If the expected results had occurred in the group stages and during last week's last-16 encounters, this match may well have been a mouthwatering clash between Spain and Argentina, but Jorge Sampaoli's side just scraped through in second place from their group, and met France in the second round a week ago. Fernando Hierro – who travelled to four World Cups as a defender for Spain – took over as manager just days before the start of the tournament following Julen Lopetegui's sacking, and guided his side to a memorable 3-3 draw with Portugal, a 1-0 victory over Iran and a 2-2 draw with Morocco in their group games.
9.15 Bear's Mission with Rob Brydon. Adventure Bear Grylls teaches the comedian some alternative survival skills. (R)
10.00 ITV News. Weather.
10.20 Film: The Bourne Identity. (2002) Thriller, starring Matt Damon.
12.40 Jackpot247. **3.00** Mr Selfridge. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Swansea Half Marathon. **6.45** The King of Queens. (R) **7.10** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Practice 3 Live. The 10th round of the season continues. **12.25** F1 Meets Toto Wolff. (R) **12.55** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Qualifying Live. Coverage of the qualifying session at Silverstone (Start-time 2.00pm). **3.50** Location, Location, Location. (R) **4.50** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.35** Escape to the Chateau: DIY. (R)
6.30 Channel 4 News.
7.00 Great Canal Journeys: India. The first of two programmes in which Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore India by canal boat. The trip begins in Kerala, a region of palm-fringed lakes, rivers and British-built canals which has had a thriving spice trade for thousands of years. They explore a boat built by a local ruler and make offerings at a temple, while Pru learns a traditional dance. (R)
8.00 Film: The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel. (2015) With the original Best Exotic Marigold Hotel a roaring success, owner Sonny decides the time is right to expand his business empire. But to do so, he and the rest of the residents must pull out all the stops to impress a potential investor's inspector – a task that proves to be easier said than done. Comedy drama sequel, with Dev Patel, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench and Richard Gere.
10.25 Film: The World's End. (2013) Five childhood friends reunite for a pub crawl in their home town, only to stumble on a threat to the entire human race. Sci-fi comedy, with Simon Pegg and Nick Frost.
12.30 Ramsay's Hotel Hell. Gordon Ramsay visits a dog-friendly hotel in urgent need of help. (R) **1.20** The Big Narstie Show. The grime MC presents an alternative entertainment show. (R) **2.15** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. A special flashback episode focusing on James, looking back at moments in his life including his 16th birthday and landing his first role at law firm, Forbes Carney. (R) **4.15** Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb. Three rival north London sellers try to clinch a sale from buyer Kelly. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.35** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **10.55** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.50** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.50** Nightmare Tenants. Slum Landlords. (R) **1.45** Bad Tenants. Rogue Landlords. (R) **2.45** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **3.45** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **4.45** Rich House, Poor House. (R) **5.45** 5 News Weekend. **5.50** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R)
6.45 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! The enforcement agents chase down a builder owing nearly £3,500 to a customer and head to south London to recover almost £10,000 from a debtor who acted as guarantor for a friend. (R)
7.40 Britain's Greatest Magician: Paul Daniels. Documentary revisiting the highlights of Paul Daniels' decades-long career as a TV magician, which saw him bring magic to the masses via grand set-piece performances such as making an elephant vanish, and shocking stunts, including his infamous iron maiden trick. The programme also charts the beginnings of Paul's interest in illusions, learning rudimentary tricks from a book during his childhood in Middlesbrough. Includes interviews with Paul's Magic Circle contemporary Stephen Mulhern, illusionists David Copperfield and Penn and Teller, and the magician's own widow and former on-stage companion Debbie McGee. (R)
9.00 TV's 50 Greatest Magic Tricks. TV illusionists have been saving ladies in half, catching bullets between their teeth, reading minds and performing feats of escapology for decades. Channel 5 counts down the best, including the astonishing set-pieces of Penn & Teller, the mind-bending of Derren Brown and the street magic of David Blaine. It features spectacular illusions, such as making the Statue of Liberty disappear, intimate card tricks and the lighter side of the business, thanks to the inclusion of comedy great Tommy Cooper. Paul Daniels and Dynamo also appear in this magic compendium. (R)
11.50 Cricket on 5.
12.45 SuperCasino. **3.10** The A-Team. (R) **4.45** House Doctor. (R) **5.10** Great Artists. (R) **5.35** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Earth's Greatest Spectacles **8.00** Simon King's Shetland Adventure **9.00** Hidden **10.00** Rik Mayall: Lord of Misrule **11.00** Sound of Cinema: The Music That Made the Movies **12.00** Top of the Pops: 1985 **1.00** Smashing Hits! The 80's Pop Map of Britain & Ireland **2.00** Je t'aime: The Story of French Song with Petula Clark **3.00** Simon King's Shetland Adventure **4.00** Close
ITV2
11.00 You've Been Framed! Gold **12.05** Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule **12.35** Catchphrase **1.20** Film: Twister (1996) **2.20** FYI Daily **2.25** Film: Twister (1996) **3.35** Film: Peter Pan (2003) **4.40** FYI Daily **4.45** Film: Peter Pan (2003) **5.45** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **6.50** FYI Daily **6.55** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **9.00** Love Island: The Weekly Hot List **10.05** Keith Lemon: Coming in America **10.50** Family Guy **12.20** American Dad! **1.15** Celebrity Ability **2.00** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
4.55 Foyle's War **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** Vera **1.00** Honest **1.50** Judge Judy **2.10** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
3.15 Pawn Stars **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** World Series of Darts Live: Las Vegas. Coverage of day two of the US Darts Masters from the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. **12.00** Film: Nacho Libre (2006) **1.05** FYI Daily **1.10** Film: Nacho Libre (2006) **1.55** Minder **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.55 Film: Postman Pat: The Movie (2014) **1.40** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **4.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.00** Young Sheldon **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Ted (2012) **11.05** Gogglebox **1.10** Tattoo Fixers **2.15** Rude Tube **4.00** Rude(ish) Tube
Film4
11.00 The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951) **1.00** Dragonball Evolution (2009) **2.45** Vice Versa (1988) **4.40** Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (2014) **6.35** Speed 2: Cruise Control (1997) **9.00** True Lies (1994) A computer salesman's wife is unaware her boring husband leads a double life as a secret agent. James Cameron's action comedy, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. **11.45** The Anomaly (2014) **1.40** Mercury Rising (1998) **3.55** Close

Advertisement for property listings, featuring a house silhouette and various property details.

QUARRY BAY
This property is situated in a quiet residential area, close to the sea. It features a large garden, a swimming pool, and a garage. The house is built of high-quality materials and has a modern interior. It is a must-see for anyone looking for a luxury home in the area. **£580,000**

Barnet Lane
This property is situated in a quiet residential area, close to the sea. It features a large garden, a swimming pool, and a garage. The house is built of high-quality materials and has a modern interior. It is a must-see for anyone looking for a luxury home in the area. **£580,000**

Milns Green Drive
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CHOICE



Rafael Nadal

Strokes of Genius: Federer v Nadal (BBC2, 6.20pm)
A look back at the 2008 Wimbledon men's singles final, which saw Rafael Nadal triumph over Roger Federer in an epic five-set encounter that lasted for four hours and 48 minutes. The contest was also halted twice for rain delays, meaning the event stretched for over seven hours before eventually reaching its conclusion not long before nightfall.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Barry Davies: The Man, The Voice, The Legend. (R) **2.00** Just Call Me Martina. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. **3.30** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Attenborough and the Giant Elephant. (R) **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **6.35** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** **Countryfile.** Ellie Harrison and Sean Fletcher explore the ground of Hampton Court Palace, home to the last remaining working shire horses in London, which provide a natural alternative to modern machinery. Plus, a look at the finished design for the Countryfile Wildlife Garden to appear at the Hampton Court Flower Show, and Anita Rani and Adam Henson meet two more candidates for the Young Presenter contest. **8.00** **Antiques Roadshow.** Fiona Bruce presents the show from Cardiff Castle, where items brought in to be valued include a simple pottery jug given as a love token, an early Hockney print found in a junk shop, and a draft score for Elgar's Enigma Variations signed by the composer. **9.00** **Foldark.** Grain prices rise, leaving the poor struggling to support their families. Ross makes a desperate gamble to help them, which draws the attention of the prime minister. However, Falmouth persuades him to compromise his principles to achieve his goals. Demetza continues her plot to bring Drake and Rosina together, but he is far more interested in a future with Morwenna. Caroline continues to repress her grief, and Arthur is driven into a murderous rage when he learns the truth about Rowella's affair. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** **Celebrities on the NHS Frontline.** To mark the 70th anniversary of the NHS, four well-known faces get first-hand experience at King's College Hospital, London. (R) **11.30** **Reggie Yates' Extreme Russia: Gay and Under Attack.** (R) **12.25** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.35 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.20** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.05** Natural World: Heligan – Secrets of the Lost Garden. (R) **9.05** Countryfile. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **12.15** Rick Stein's German Bite. (R) **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Garden Rescue. (R) **3.00** Mountain Lions – Big Cats in High Places: Natural World. (R) **4.00** Operation Grand Canyon with Dan Snow. (R) **5.00** Flog It! (R) **5.50** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing. (R) **6.20** **Strokes of Genius: Federer v Nadal.** A look back at the 2008 Wimbledon men's singles final, which saw Rafael Nadal triumph over Roger Federer in an epic five-set encounter that lasted for four hours and 48 minutes. **8.00** **Russia with Simon Reeve.** The traveller's second leg of his journey across Russia takes him from south-east Siberia to the far south west and the majestic Caucasus Mountains. Along the way he stops off at the oldest lake on earth, witnesses a commemoration of the Second World War in the city of Irkutsk and visits a cafe where patriotic staff and punters perform a daily rendition of the national anthem. He also finds out how the collapse of communism has seen millions of disenfranchised Russians join new sects and religions, with one community worshipping a man claiming to be the reincarnation of Christ. (R) **9.00** **The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan.** The comedian visits Ethiopia, experiencing local traditional medicine and jazz music, as well as learning more about the country's oppressive political regime. **10.00** **Reporting Trump's First Year: The Fourth Estate.** Violence erupts in Charlottesville and President Trump fails to denounce white supremacists, before further stirring division by blaming the media for the nation's problems. **10.55** **Film: The Box.** (2009) A couple receive a box that will make them rich at the press of a button – but if they do so, someone will die. Sci-fi thriller, with Cameron Diaz and James Marsden. **12.45** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **1.45** Holby City. (R) **2.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Mission: Impossible. (R) **6.55** The Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Ninjabo: Tournament of Elements. (R) **7.30** The Haunted Hathaways. (R) **7.55** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball on Sunday. **9.25** **Film: Problem Child.** (1990) **10.55** The Best of the Voice Worldwide. **11.55** Midsomer Murders. (R) **1.55** ITV News: Weather. **2.00** Catchphrase. (R) **2.45** Tenable. (R) **3.45** Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. (R) **4.45** **Film: Despicable Me 2.** (2013) Animated comedy sequel, with the voice of Steve Carell. **6.30** **ITV News:** Weather. **6.45** **Regional Programme:** Weather. **7.00** **The Chase: Celebrity Special.** Bradley Walsh presents as one-time Coronation Street actor Jimi Mistry (Khaid Nazir), former Emmerdale star Gemma Atkinson (Carly Hope), Loose Women's Nadia Sawalha and veteran actor James Cosmo pit their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser, in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds for the charity of their choice. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught. (R) **8.00** **Vera.** The detective is drawn into Newcastle's underworld to discover the identity of a murder victim found dead in the river, with no clue as to who he is apart from a distinctive drugs wrapper. She discovers the dead man had ties to some very dangerous people, many of whom may have wanted him dead, while a witness's testimony links the case to a remote farm where a murder took place 13 years previously. The connection brings Kenny's past back to haunt him, as he was responsible for seeing the perpetrator convicted. (R) **10.00** **ITV News:** Weather. **10.20** **Tommy Cooper Forever.** (R) **11.20** **The Big Fish Off.** Former athletics stars Linford Christie and Katharine Merry join team captains Ali Hamidi and Dean Macey. (R) **12.10** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.05 Motor Sport: Volkswagen Racing Cup. **6.30** Motor Sport: FIA World Rallycross Championship. **7.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Bake Off: The Professionals. (R) **10.00** Sunday Brunch. **1.00** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Build-Up. Previewing the 10th round of the season. **1.40** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live. Coverage of the 10th round of the season (Start-time 2.00pm). **4.30** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Reaction. **5.35** Bang on Budget. **6.30** **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **The Great British Germ Hunt.** Kate Quilton and a team explore the invisible world of bacteria, as they conduct a series of unique experiments to find out why these germs are crucial for our health. The team head to a music festival to see if a weekend of partying improves the bacterial diversity of a group of volunteers, and two ordinary British homes are put under the microscope to reveal the germs we live with. **8.00** **Bake Off: The Professionals.** Liam Charles and Tom Allen host the final of the patisserie competition, with the last three remaining teams of bakers pulling out all the stops to impress judges Benoit Blin and Cherish Finden and be crowned as the first champion of the professional series. The bakers face a marathon nine-hour challenge, during which they must create a lavish banquet display large enough to serve 80 people. Their creation has to combine four different types of dessert and a towering showpiece combining chocolate and sugar work. Last in the series. **9.00** **The Handmaid's Tale.** A sick baby tests Ofred and Serena Joy. Meanwhile, Janine finally faces Naomi. Dystopian drama based on Margaret Atwood's novel about a future American theocracy. **10.10** **World's Tiniest Masterpieces.** Profile of sculptor Willard Wigan, whose minuscule work can only be glimpsed through a microscope, as he creates a sculpture small enough to fit inside a human cell. **11.05** **Film: The Eagle.** (2011) Action adventure, starring Channing Tatum and Jamie Bell. **1.20** The Last Leg. (R) **2.15** The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R) **3.15** Gillette World Sport. **3.40** My Kitchen Rules. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wissper. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.30** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.35** The Secret Life of Puppies. (R) **6.40** Seaside Antics. (R) **6.45** Only the Little White Van. (R) **6.55** Simon. (R) **7.00** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Pirata & Capitano. **8.35** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Floogals. (R) **9.05** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.20** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.35** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.10** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.45** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud 3. **11.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.00** The Secret Life of Puppies: Terrible Twos. (R) **1.55** The Secret Life of Puppies: Terrible Twos. (R) **2.55** **Film: Dirty Dancing.** (1987) Romantic drama, with Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey. **5.00** **Film: Maid in Manhattan.** (2002) Romantic comedy, with Jennifer Lopez and Ralph Fiennes. **7.00** **Cricket on 5.** England v India. Action from the final T20 of the three-match series, which took place at The Brightside Ground in Bristol. Prior to the commencement of this series, England had an excellent record against India in this format of the game when playing on home soil, winning all three of the matches to have taken place. **8.00** **Chuckie Time with the Chuckle Brothers.** The comedy duo introduce this new clip-show, featuring face plants and badly behaved fish. **8.55** **5 News Weekend.** **9.00** **Film: We're the Millers.** (2013) A drug dealer is hired to pick up a shipment of marijuana in Mexico and bring it back over the border. To make himself look less suspicious, he recruits a stripper and two teenagers to pose as a perfect all-American family on holiday, only to end up getting on the wrong side of a drug cartel. Comedy, with Jason Sudeikis, Jennifer Aniston and Emma Roberts. **11.10** **Film: Hot Tub Time Machine 2.** (2015) A group of friends travels into the future to solve a mystery after one of them gets shot by a mysterious stranger. Comedy, starring Rob Corddry and Craig Robinson. **1.00** SuperCasino. **3.10** The A-Team. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Vienna Summer Night Concert
2018 8.15 Legends of the Deep: Giant Squid **9.00** Horizon **10.00** The Sky at Night **10.30** Hunting the Nazi Gold Train **11.30** The Art of Scandinavia **12.30** The Art That Made Mexico: Paradise, Power and Prayers **1.30** David Starkey's Music & Monarchy **2.30** Horizon **3.30** Close
ITV2
11.50 You've Been Framed! Top 100 Talent **12.50** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.20** Take Me Out **2.35** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **3.45** FYI Daily **3.50** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **4.25** Film: The Mummy (1999) **5.25** FYI Daily **5.30** Film: The Mummy (1999) **6.45** Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **9.00** Love Island **10.00** Love Island: Afterburn **11.05** Family Guy **12.35** American Dad! **1.30** CelebAbility **2.15** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
7.00 Victoria **9.00** Unforgotten **11.05** Wire in the Blood **1.00** Blue Murder **2.20** Liverpool **1.3.15** Road to Avonlea **4.55** Murder, She Wrote **5.45** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
12.00 Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage two of the most prestigious race on the calendar. **5.00** Snooker v Darts **5.10** Storage Wars: Texas **6.00** Pawn Stars **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** Film: Rush Hour 2 (2001) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10** Film: Rush Hour 2 (2001) **9.55** Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **10.55** FYI Daily **11.00** Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **11.50** Minder **2.05** The Motorbike Show **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.00 The Goldbergs **1.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.30** Young Sheldon **2.00** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special **6.30** Film: Mrs Doubtfire (1993) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Gogglebox **11.00** Gogglebox Australia **12.05** The Big Bang Theory **1.05** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.05** Gogglebox Australia **2.55** Rude Tube **3.25** Hollyoaks
Film4
11.00 Stuart Little (1999) **1.00** Stuart Little 2 (2002) **2.30** The Three Stooges (2012) **4.20** The Trip (1964) **7.00** Taxi (2004) **9.00** Faster (2010) **10.55** The Purge (2013) **12.35** Piranha 3DD (2012) **2.10** Phase IV (1973) **3.55** Close

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CHICAGO THE MUSICAL

PHOENIX THEATRE, LONDON

Chicago is officially back home in London's West End and is about to welcome a new star to the Phoenix Theatre: yes, it's true - Martin Kemp, from pop legends Spandau Ballet and BBC's Eastenders, will join the cast as Billy Flynn from Monday 2nd July for a strictly limited season.

Winner of six Tony Awards, two Olivier Awards and a Grammy, the sexiest, sassiest, most sophisticated Broadway musical in history is celebrating 21 years of standing ovations in style.

The dazzling tale of jazz slayer Roxie Hart, her cell-block rival Velma Kelly and the smooth-talking lawyer Billy Flynn has thrilled audiences across the world since 1996.

With the original Broadway choreography by Ann Reinking in the style of Bob Fosse and a sizzling score featuring the classic songs "Razzle Dazzle", "Cell Block Tango" and "All That Jazz", Chicago is so good it should be illegal.

Chicago is playing at the Phoenix Theatre until 5th January 2019.

Don't miss out, book now. It'd be a crime to miss it...

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Killer Date, Channel 5, 3.15pm
An attractive woman agrees to go on the date arranged online by her sister. The app she is supplied with uses GPS technology and when she starts to receive disturbing messages via the medium, every man in her life becomes a suspect. Thriller, starring Anna Hutchinson. (2016)

TUESDAY
Rocky V, ITV, 10.50pm
The heavyweight champion is forced into retirement due to brain damage inflicted in the ring, and finds his fortune has been lost on the stock market by his accountant. Returning to his working-class roots, he trains an up-and-coming fighter, only to see his protege turn against him. Drama sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire and real-life boxer Tommy Morrison. (1990)

WEDNESDAY
Sex, Lies And Deception, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Premiere. Samantha and Paul's marriage is put under strain when a car accident involving their daughter Jane sees her admitted to hospital. Drama, starring Jessalyn Gilsig. (2018)



The Last Boy Scout, Friday, ITV, 10.45pm

THURSDAY
Clash of the Titans, Channel 5, 9pm
The son of the Greek god Zeus is raised by humans and grows up to reject his immortal heritage in anger at the gods' cruel treatment of humans. He sets out on a quest to find a means to kill the evil lord of the underworld in revenge for his father's death, facing all manner of strange creatures. Mythological adventure, with Sam Worthington, Liam Neeson, Ralph Fiennes and Gemma Arterton. (2010)

FRIDAY
The Last Boy Scout, ITV, 10.45pm
A private eye half-heartedly takes a job as bodyguard to a nightclub dancer. A shocking attack, however, forces him to take his duties more seriously, and before long he uncovers evidence of murder and corruption - all linked to the world of American football. Action thriller, starring Bruce Willis, Damon Wayans, Chelsea Field and Halle Berry. (1991)

New mystery series hopes to be a novel success

Can an eight-part TV version of Joan Lindsay's classic novel outshine the much-admired film version?

Those who have seen director Peter Weir's haunting movie would probably answer in the negative, but in recent years, the small screen has come to rival its bigger cousin for quality, so we may be onto a winner.

In recent times, the likes of Big Little Lies, The Handmaid's Tale, Top of the Lake and Sky's latest series, Sharp Objects, have gone some way to boost the number of leading roles for women, and Picnic at Hanging Rock certainly lends a hand too – it's dominated by strong females.

When the book was published back in 1967, it was hugely acclaimed and quickly became known as one of the greatest entries in Australian literature, but its origins have puzzled readers ever since.

Some are utterly convinced it's based on a true story, while Lindsay herself did little to persuade people one way or the other. However, her housekeeper later claimed her employer had dreamt the basic idea.

A 2017 article from the Australian magazine The Age stated, "The dream had centred on a summer picnic at a place called Hanging Rock, which Joan knew well from her childhood holidays."

"Joan told Rae (her housekeeper) that the dream had felt so real that when she awoke at 7.30am, she could still feel the hot summer breeze blowing through the gum trees and she could still hear the peals of laughter and conversation of the people she'd imagined, and their gaiety and lightness of spirit."

All this mystery merely adds to the tale's appeal.

The film starred Rachel Roberts, while Vivean Gray – instantly recognisable to Neighbours fans for her subsequent role as battleaxe Mrs Mangel – had a small role, as did Oscar-nominated actress Jacki Weaver.

This time around it's Game of Thrones and The Hunger Games

star Natalie Dormer who takes the lead role of widowed headmistress Hester Appleyard, who arrives in Australia as the tale begins.

"I'm excited that the BBC Two is bringing this magical reimaging of an Australian classic to the UK audience," says Dormer. "It's a collaboration of which I'm very proud to be a part."

Sue Deeks, the BBC's head of programme acquisition, adds: "This stylistically bold and atmospheric take on Picnic At Hanging Rock - led by one of Britain's most exciting actors, Natalie Dormer - will be irresistible both to fans of the classic novel and to those coming to this mysterious story for the first time."

Ms Appleyard's reasons for moving to the other side of the world are shrouded in mystery, but in just six years, she manages to turn her self-named college into a leading educational establishment attended by bright girls from well-to-do families.

It's situated in an isolated mansion in the bush, close to the local beauty spot of Hanging Rock.



Picnic at Hanging Rock, Wednesday, BBC2, 9.05pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Who Do You Think You Are?
BBC1, 9pm
Olivia Colman finds some surprises in her ancestral history, and her belief that most of those in her family tree emanate from Norfolk turns out to be far from the truth. Olivia is astonished to discover that she needs to travel to India to find out more about her great-great-great grandmother Harriot, who was an orphan in 1811 on a ship bound for England from Calcutta. Harriot's father was an an Englishman, but the identity of her mother, who gave birth to her in a remote Indian village, is a mystery Olivia delights in solving.

TUESDAY
Horizon: How to Build a Time Machine
BBC2, 9pm
Time travel is not forbidden by the laws of nature - but to build a time machine, experts need to understand more about those laws and how to subvert them. Cameras follow scientists, including Professors Ron Mallet and Tamara Davies, who are working on the cutting edge of discovery - men and women who may discover how to build wormholes, manipulate entangled photons or build fully functioning time crystals. In short, enable an engineer of the future to build a machine

that allows people to travel back and forward in time.

999: What's Your Emergency?
Channel 4, 9pm
Documentary following the emergency services in Wiltshire, continuing with crimes relating to the rising use of cannabis. PC Joe Tompkinson is cut up at a roundabout and when he stops the car responsible, all he can smell is the drug. PC Adam Burson visits a family whose members have had a brick thrown through their front window - a dealer's retaliation - and officers are called by a mother after she is assaulted by her son, who is suspected to be suffering from cannabis psychosis.

WEDNESDAY
Secrets of the National Trust with Alan Titchmarsh
Channel 5, 9pm
This time, the presenter visits Mount Stewart on the shores of Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland, which was home to the Stewart family for more than 250 years. They were given the title of Marquess of Londonderry and it was the Marchioness, Lady Edith, who

was largely responsible for transforming the house. Alan learns about Edith's eclectic taste as he looks around her private bedroom suite, and meets her granddaughter, Lady Rose. Elsewhere, Nina travels to the Peroni Archive in Belfast to discover how Lady Edith was active in the Suffragist movement.



Who Do You Think You Are?, Monday, BBC1, 9pm

THURSDAY
Trump & Britain: Love or Loathing? Tonight
ITV, 7.30pm
Donald Trump is about to make his first official visit to the UK as President, and it's been predicted he'll be greeted by thousands of protestors – there's even been reports that a specially designed orange inflatable will be flown over London to mark the occasion. But will his reception really be as hostile as some sections of the media are predicting? Tonight looks at what we can expect

from the US leader's visit, and hears from a varied group of public figures, including Lord Sugar, Nigel Farage, Germaine Greer and Alex Salmond, to find out what they think about the trip. Martin Geissler will also ask what the visit says about the state of the so-called 'special relationship' and what it will mean for Britain's future dealings with the controversial President.

FRIDAY
First Night of the Proms
BBC2, 8.30pm
New series. At London's Royal Albert Hall, the new season launches with a feast for the eyes and ears in the world premiere of Five Telegrams, with music by Anna Meredith and stunning digital projections by 59 Productions marking the centenary of the end of the First World War. The all-British programme also features Vaughan Williams' pre-war choral masterpiece Toward the Unknown Region, along with Holst's evergreen Proms favourite The Planets - the first piece Mars, Bringer of War, famously anticipates the onset of mechanistic warfare. The BBC Symphony Orchestra, under conductor Sakari Oramo, is joined by the combined forces of the BBC Symphony Chorus, the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and the BBC Proms Youth Ensemble. Presented by Katie Derham.

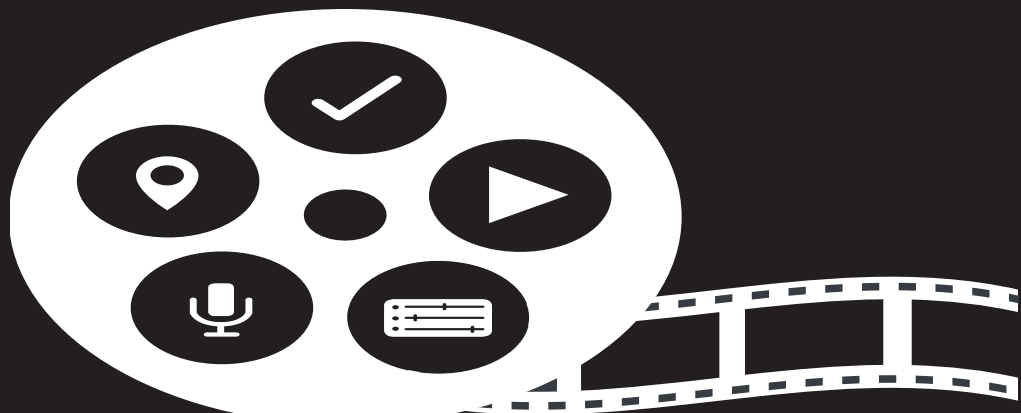
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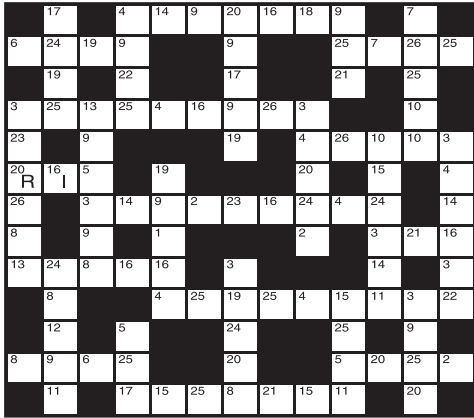


BRAIN GYM

No.487

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

Y	R	P	K	S	N	A	O	I	V	D	T	C
J	B	H	M	F	G	Z	X	Q	W	U	L	E

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

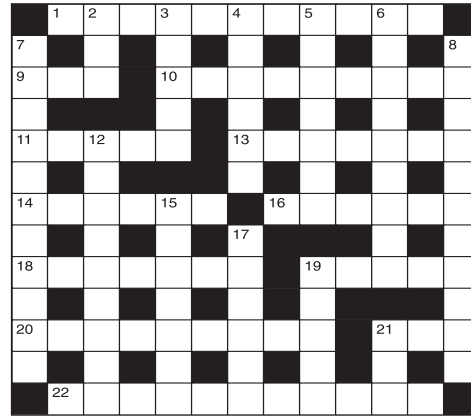
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Feeling of optimism engendered by fine liquor? (4,7)
- 9 & 2Dn. Dine away from home and consume all the food? (3,3)
- Tall men to make a distribution (9)
- Put the squeeze on newspapers (5)
- Having no faith in merit of icy clan (7)
- Irritate by doing some embroidery? (6)
- A tense situation in a parliament (6)
- No let-up for rich in revolution (7)
- Turner of metal at heavy engineering plant (5)
- Eastern country where 100 produce eggs for making pottery (5,4)
- Let the cat out in 22, for example (3)
- Ignore Della for top part (7,4)

Down

- See 9 Across
- Has pull when the scores are level (5)
- Article in position in royal residence (6)
- Reunite the train (7)
- Cutting of furrow by worker (9)
- Maintain contact without letting the ball come into play (4,2,5)
- Attending the whole programme in any case (2,3,6)
- Judicially kill about four in managerial capacity (9)
- Pull slippery customer up on sheltered side (7)
- Lets on it's not honestly gained (6)
- Stratum suitable for egg producer (5)
- Break the law with this instrument (3)



Quick Clues:

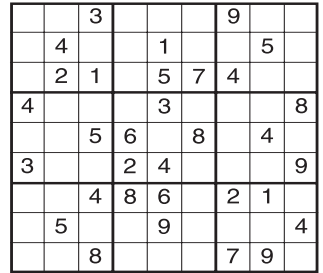
Across

- Homeliness (11)
- Also (3)
- Unfeeling (9)
- Become void (5)
- Chiefs (7)
- Stew (6)
- Beast (6)
- Ancestry (7)
- Less (5)
- Cheat (9)
- Everybody (3)
- Solemnisation (11)

Down

- Strange (3)
- The best (5)
- Struggle (6)
- Include (7)
- Unreliability (11)
- Stupidly (11)
- Mournful (9)
- Fetter (7)
- Improved (6)
- Deserve (5)
- Fuss (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	7	2	9	3	8	6	5	4
5	9	4	2	6	7	3	1	8
8	3	6	1	4	5	7	2	9
7	4	1	5	9	2	8	6	3
3	6	9	4	8	1	2	7	5
2	8	5	6	7	3	9	4	1
6	1	8	3	2	4	5	9	7
9	5	7	8	1	6	4	3	2
4	2	3	7	5	9	1	8	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Beau; 3 Compacts; 9 Salamis; 10 Arena; 11 Battle of wits; 13 Lately; 15 Etches; 17 Petty officer; 20 Lire; 21 Perturb; 22 Pleasure; 23 Stud. Down: 1 Baseball; 2 Aloit; 4 On show; 5 Play with fire; 6 Cheats; 7 Seat; 8 Small letters; 12 Ascribed; 14 Theatre; 16 Copper; 18 Court; 19 Slip.
QUICK - Across: 1 Itch; 3 Scribble; 9 Suppose; 10 Tulle; 11 Cheese-paring; 13 Recoil; 15 Cinema; 17 Unsuccessful; 20 Onion; 21 Emotion; 22 Pressing; 23 Once. Down: 1 Insecure; 2 Copse; 4 Creepy; 5 Intermittent; 6 Balance; 7 Eden; 8 Constituents; 12 Parlarice; 14 Confide; 16 Screen; 18 Feign; 19 Pomp.

Quiz

- What is the highest mountain on the continent of Europe?
- With which genre is author Michael Moorcock associated?
- Which order of chivalry did Princess Anne receive in 1994?
- Which alcoholic drink is used in making lobster Newburg?
- Which element has the Latin name plumbum?
- Who became a Dame and received a Tony award within 48 hours in 1994?
- What was the first name of baby care writer Dr Spock?
- Which French tennis player banned her father from attending Wimbledon?
- In which ocean are the Maldives?
- Which organisation's agents were nicknamed G-Men?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Japan; 2 Bobby Charlton; 3 Insects; 4 Santa Fe; 5 Hockey; 6 Harvard University; 7 Italy; 8 A pixel; 9 Prunus; 10 Hundred Years' War.
Niner: PROCLAIMS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

768895
163163
423395

gives a dance,
gives a second dance,
gives a poem.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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France – and real home from home

SPACIOUS, calm, comforting, a real home-from-home – what more could you ask for in a holiday rental? That's exactly what I discovered at a recently-restored farmhouse in the tiny village of Glatigny in Normandy.

Owners Sam and Francesca Aford have created the perfect escape from our usually frantic lives in a quiet spot close to the most fantastic expanses of beach (often deserted) and minutes away from two charming towns offering a range of bars and restaurants and a wealth of other attractions a little further afield.

They have created a wonderful space from what was basically a shell. There's a large open-plan kitchen, dining room and lounge complete with a huge ornate wood burner (actually made in Ironbridge in Shropshire!).

VIEW

On the first floor from the landing there is a breathtaking view straight up to the roof timbers neatly framing a traditional French chandelier. This oversized landing has another lounge area, a desk for working on if you really can't leave the office behind, and an extensive library. Off a corridor there are two beautiful bedrooms with original antique furnishings and an imposing, but gorgeous, bathroom with a roll-top bath.

Up a pullout set of stairs and onto the top floor, a mezzanine level which provides another lounge including a third bedroom – a perfect hideaway spot and ideal for children! If you need more beds the red Chesterfield sofa and the sofa on the landing are both purpose built 'sofa-beds'. There are also spare mattresses available. But for me, it's perfect for one or two families with a couple of children each.

The kitchen has just about everything you could want and there are two outside courtyards – the front south-

The stunning beach close to the farmhouse



facing courtyard is a delight with seating and a large pizza oven/barbecue and a smaller rear courtyard which catches the morning sun. There are also extensive gardens just across the road.

Glatigny is on the western side of the Cotentin peninsula, an area much favoured for summer holidays by Parisians, especially Barnville-Carteret.

It is set between the two small towns of La Haye du Puit and Portbail. Both offer a wide range range of shops as well as eateries and cafés along with very good weekly markets. We ate very well in both towns

and especially well in Le Hetier. Their menu du jour at lunchtime is great value for money (three courses for around £10) and so tasty. It's where locals eat, and that says a lot.

Both Portbail and Barnville/Carteret offer great equestrian stables for horse riding and the rides along the beach aren't to be missed. Club Hippique 'A Cheval', has a great range of horses and ponies for all sizes and abilities but they also do rides along the beach. That was one experience ticked off my bucket list.

From around June to early September, on most

weekends, many towns and villages nearby hold festivals and fêtes with great outdoor music and food. Most towns also have what is called a Brocante, which essentially is a furniture market, but these really are worth a visit as it is very rare such quantities of antiques are under a single roof for such low prices.

Mont St Michel is not too far away, it is a breathtaking place and worth a visit. The Bayeux Tapestry is also close by and is an interesting day out.

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Rio is a decent sized family hatchback at reasonable cost

By Carmel Stewart

Along with the rest of the Kia range, the Rio has really grown up over the past few years, developing into a decent sized, family hatch back with plenty of choice and a not too outrageous price point.

The current fourth generation model sits on an all-new platform, with new suspension, new steering, a new look, new technologies and new engine line-up.

As always with Kia, there is plenty of choice – four petrol engines and two diesels plus three gearboxes, three + two trim levels and a clear pricing structure.

All come with five doors and that industry-best, seven-year warranty. The entry-level model – badged 1 – includes air con, electric front windows, a 3.8-inch display screen, Bluetooth, steering wheel-mounted audio controls and LED daytime running lights. Safety kit includes hill-start assist to prevent the car from rolling backwards when setting off on steep inclines.

All models above 1 have autonomous emergency braking and a lane departure warning system fitted as standard, although this is an option at entry-level.

But a step up to level 3 is needed for the essential 21st century smartphone connectivity – Apple CarPlay and the like. Also included are Bluetooth with voice recognition and music streaming, a seven-inch



Behind the wheel is a comfortable place to be

touch screen, DAB radio and rear parking sensors together with 16-inch alloys, black faux leather upholstery, satellite navigation, heated front seats, heated steering wheel and rain-sensing front wipers.

Behind the wheel is a comfortable place to be regardless of trim. The Rio won't burn anyone off at the lights or encourage straight-lining the corners but it does offer a very decent, uncomplicated driving experience with no unwarranted surprises.

Choose the 1.0 litre 99bhp turbo petrol engine and you'll be rewarded with a smooth, efficient, very competent drive. Average economy runs at 62.8mpg and CO2 emissions at 102g/km.

For the red rosette of economy, diesel selection is inevitable. Kia's 1.4litre CRDi with 76bhp or 86bhp at its disposal have clocked an average 80.7mpg and 74.3mpg in official tests.

Five or six-speed manual gearboxes – both with stop/start technology – are allocated according to engine size. If the four-speed automatic is your transmission of choice, then 1.4litre 98bhp petrol is your only option. Economy runs at 56.5mpg, CO2 emissions at 114g/km. Zero to 60mph takes 11.8 seconds and top speed redlines at 108mph.

The cabin is roomy enough for five but four would be more comfortable unless the rear seat passengers are all Slimming World finalists. There are bottle shaped spaces in the door pockets and various places for stashing bits and bobs. The boot is a very acceptable 325 litres.

Prices start at a reasonable £12,000 for trim 1, powered by a 1.25litre 83bhp petrol engine, coupled with a five-speed manual gearbox. A step up to trim 2 with the same engine and gearing puts the price up to £14,240.

For trim 3 the price becomes slightly more cheek-sucking at £16,240 but not seriously so given the very decent amount of kit.

Tucked in below and above 3 are the two special editions – Pulse and First Edition.

Globally, the Rio is Kia's best-seller, with sales close to 475,000 a year, and while it is overshadowed in the UK by the Sportage and cee'd range, it still accounts for almost one-sixth of the company's sales.



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Metallic red Micra makes you smile

By Carmel Stewart

Oh, how we will miss the economy of our diesel-powered cars when they are finally eradicated from our roads.

The 1.5dci humming nicely away under the bonnet of the stylish Nissan Micra hatchback, for example, achieved an astonishing 77.9mpg on a run of about 130 miles and that included a couple of city centres and the inevitable motorway road works.

Official stats show an average of 83mpg is achievable in the unlikely event of a mechanically steady right foot, a prevailing wind and a traffic free run. CO2 emissions puther out at the rate of 97g/km.

If petrol is your preferred option, Nissan gives you the choice of either a 0.9litre, 90ps, three-cylinder turbo, or a 1.0litre 71ps petrol. Expect an average 64mpg/99g/km from the former and 61mpg/103g/kg from the latter. All engines are linked to a neat and tidy five-speed manual transmission.

The vehicle itself is as impressive in appearance as it is in performance. Longer, lower, and wider than the previous model, the five-door Micra has quietly developed into a stylish and sophisticated vehicle with neat styling outside and quality materials inside.

In the spacious cabin the dash is particularly striking, wrapped as it is in soft-touch, two-tone, faux-leather. There is reasonable leg room and plenty of head room, all seats are well upholstered and comfortable. The front two are grippy and supportive.

At 300 litres, the deep lipped boot is more than sufficient for the supermarket shopping or the family luggage. Drop the rear seat and that expands to 1,004 litres and there are various storage spaces dotted around the cabin.



The dash is particularly striking



The vehicle is impressive in appearance

Classy features include recessed rear door handle a la Alfa Romeo in days gone by, a large leather-wrapped, flat-bottomed steering wheel and an optional Bose sound system that includes speakers in the driver's headrest.

Behind the wheel, the French-built Micra is as much fun to drive as it is to look at, being agile, composed and with plenty of oomph from the 1.5litre diesel engine.

The suspension is particularly well-tuned

and deals admirably with our (horrible) road surfaces thanks to Nissan's Intelligent Ride Control which automatically makes minute adjustments to the set-up – ditto the intelligent Trace Control which is Nissan's version of torque vectoring.

Safety features now include Intelligent Lane Intervention, a safety system which gently nudges the Micra back on to the right path should it be required and a very useful blind spot monitor.



It's a stylish and sophisticated vehicle with neat styling outside and quality materials inside

Specification levels depend on the trim selected - Visia, Visia+, Acenta, N-Connecta or Tekna. Standard spec at entry-level includes LED daytime running lights, hill start assist, Bluetooth and six airbags. A step up to Acenta is needed for smartphone connectivity.

And, for those who really like to make their mark, there are more than 100 personalisation options.

Prices start at £12,750 for the Visia rising

to £18,090 for the Tekna top spec which includes rear parking sensors and rear-view camera, 17-inch alloys, rear roof spoiler, cruise control, electric front windows, rain sensing wipers and high beam assist which is a real boon for night driving as the headlights automatically switch from dipped to high beam.

A deep red metallic exterior finish adds £575 to the cost and a smile every time you look at it.

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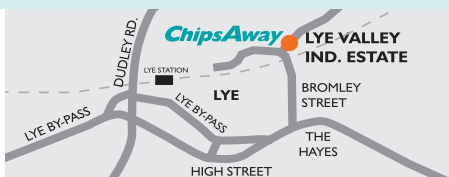
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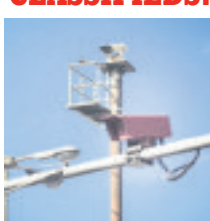
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Joshua at Bar Sport, Cannock with world class boxing referee Terry O'Connor from Codsall



At Wolverhampton Racecourse Joshua with, left, James Ward (Gold Star) and, right, Andy Sahota (Showfighter)



Champion Anthony Joshua with his array of belts



Anthony Joshua defeated Wladimir Klitschko at Wembley last year

How Joshua is rewriting the boxing record books

WHEN it comes to sporting superstars, they don't come any bigger than Anthony Joshua.

Humble, hungry and infectiously happy, the WBA, WBO and IBF heavyweight champion of the world is doing something British boxing has never seen before.

In just 21 fights he has reached the top of his sport – with American Deontay Wilder, the holder of the WBC belt, the only man standing in his way from making history and unifying the entire division.

And his next fight, says promoter Eddie Hearn, will be against Russian Alexander Povetkin.

It's the way Joshua has gone about his business though that has seen him grow a fanbase like no other. While sports fans idolise him, Joshua's politeness and joy for life has seen him capture the hearts of the nation. And he recently treated fans in Wolverhampton and Cannock to meet and greet sessions.

The reality is everyone and their nan loves the Hertfordshire-born heavyweight, who seemingly hasn't changed despite a rag-to-riches tale.

Wealthy beyond his wildest dreams, it is only in the past 12 months the 28-year-old has moved out of the former council flat he shared with his mother in Golders Green.

Determined

His new house is nearby and a 15-minute drive from a £500,000 Finchley apartment he bought for his ex-girlfriend and their infant son, Joseph.

But while he is now a superstar with the world at his feet, Joshua isn't getting carried away. And he is absolutely determined to enjoy his life and time in the spotlight. He said recently when meeting fans in the city: "I'm in Wolverhampton, I've never been here before and I want to come back next week because it is lively.

"It's a two-hour drive from my home and I've never been here, can you believe it? I need to start exploring. We're three hours from Morocco by plane. Two hours from France on the Eurostar.

"I hear athletes that say they can't do things because of their insurance policy. I'm not going to protect myself from reality. I'm not having that, let's go out and have a good time. Let's do it, let's have fun."

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"I've not reached my peak. I have made a few mistakes and I know what I want to achieve"

When speaking to Joshua, two things are clear. The first is that he is incredibly grateful for the life he now has. He may have worked incredibly hard to get there, but you'll never hear him moan.

"I'm not complaining about anything," he continued. "You just have to learn how to deal with the hard work. I'm smiling. Hard work has been my breakthrough. I'm not the most talented so I've got to enjoy the hard work."

The second thing that strikes you about him is how obsessed – repeat, obsessed – he is by becoming the best he can be. He knows he is on the brink of being regarded as one of the all-time greats – and that is something he isn't going to let pass him by.

"I'm very comfortable with where I am now," he continued. "I've not reached my peak. I have made a few mistakes and I know what I want to achieve.

"This is not about the money. What will make me content is knowing I gave my best.

"There is no financial package out there that can make you feel content with your life. I want to give it my all, that is what matters to me.

"One day – and that day will come – I don't want to sit watching the next generation of boxers thinking I didn't achieve my potential.

"I want to give it my best – inside and outside the ring. Now I see myself as a student of boxing. I'm always watching old fights. I love Evander Holyfield. He is the first fighter I have watched that I can really learn from. He has got rhythm. And I respect him so much because he didn't dodge anyone.

"Mike Tyson didn't box Riddick Bowe. Riddick Bowe didn't fight Lennox Lewis. But Holyfield fought

Tyson, Lewis and Riddick. He boxed them all. What a man – the ultimate warrior."

Joshua's rise to the top has been unprecedented. After winning gold at the London Olympics in 2012, he seriously contemplated defending his title in Brazil four years later. Instead, he made what, for him, was a difficult decision to go pro.

Yet he has since stormed through the heavyweight division with his eye-catching win over Wladimir Klitschko one of the greatest bouts of all time.

Away from the ring though, things haven't always been plain sailing. In 2009, Joshua was put on remand in Reading Prison for what he describes as 'fighting and other crazy stuff'. Then in March 2011, he was pulled over for speeding, with police finding cannabis hidden in a sports bag. And Joshua admits there was a time when he was in danger of losing his way.

"At school, I couldn't sit down for six hours a day – I was an active kid," he said. "It's hard to go from lesson to lesson. Some kids excel at that, but most kids want to be out.

Respectful

"I think my teachers would say I was a nice kid because I was always respectful, but I was a little bit disruptive at times.

"I was still getting into a bit of trouble up until about 2011. I was in London. I lived on an estate and I wanted to party and go out drinking.

"But I was a member of an amateur boxing club and I got a call to go up to Sheffield to be involved with the Olympic team.

"I hadn't come from a sporting background. I didn't have a clue what Olympic boxing was. But I went there to see what it was about and they kept me on the development squad.

"I wanted to kind of keep my hustle going on. I focused on balancing the two. But I remember, one day, speaking to my friend and saying 'I think I might be OK at this boxing thing.'

"I was about 20 years old. But I never went into boxing to be a boxer it was more about confidence."

Joshua admits both his parents are proud of how he has since dedicated his life to his sport.

"I wasn't ever looking for trouble, I was always respectful because that is how my parents raised me," the fighter said.

Star-studded match for Air Ambulance

CELEBRITIES from the world of music, television and Hollywood will converge on Walsall FC next year for a charity match in aid of the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

The star-studded match, on May 11, is being organised by Sellebrity Soccer and Midlands Air Ambulance Charity. Celebrities taking part include Calum Best, actor Stephen Graham and former Blue member Lee Ryan. Ex-footballers Darren Byfield and Paul Konchesky are also hoping to line-up. More players and special guest managers will be announced later.

Early bird supporters can buy tickets until December for £10 for adults and £5 for under 14s. Tickets are on sale at www.eticketing.co.uk/walsallfc/details/event.aspx?eventref=1798

A limited number of VIP Tickets are available at £35 per person, with access to the Players' Lounge before and after the match. A celebrity player pre-match dinner on May 10 costs £50 per person. Limited sponsorship packages are also available on 0800 8402040.

Old clubs in friendly clash for Regis Trophy

WEST BROM will host Coventry City at The Hawthorns in a pre-season friendly to celebrate the life of Cyrille Regis.

The Baggies will face the Sky Blues, with whom Regis won the FA Cup in 1987, on Saturday, July 28, in their final warm-up game before the Championship season starts. The two clubs will be competing for the inaugural Cyrille Regis Memorial Trophy in honour of the iconic striker who died aged 59 in January. Ticket details will be announced at a later date.

It is hoped other Midlands clubs will contest the trophy in years to come. Legendary forward Regis was a close friend and mentor of Albion head coach Darren Moore, who has helped organise the memorial match together with the Regis family.

"It's a real honour," said Cyrille's widow Julia. "I think Cyrille would be slightly embarrassed and amused by the attention but that speaks volumes about who he was, understated. In our grief we have taken great comfort by the love everyone has shown and continues to do."

Uni team steps out on football pyramid

THE University of Wolverhampton men's football team has entered a team in the Football League pyramid. The team already plays in the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) competition but from next season will also enter a team into the Total Motion Midlands Football League.

Known as WLW Football FC the team will be made up of university staff and students, as well as the community, and will play in the league's third division.

The league is the 12th tier of the national football pyramid and is seven tiers away from the National League.

The team is based at the University's Walsall Campus and pre-season training has kicked off this week.

Anyone joining the university in September, or a current student who wants to be involved, should contact Martin Longworth by phone on 07926 647811 or email m.longworth@wlw.ac.uk or James Dale, sports manager, at james.dale@wlw.ac.uk



SPORTS DESK 01902 319531

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Battle of the Baggies II on Khan bill

THE long-awaited Battle of the Baggies II will provide chief support to Amir Khan's return to Birmingham in September.

Jason Welborn and Tommy Langford will head a packed undercard at Arena Birmingham in a British Middleweight title rematch. Welborn won the title from Langford via a split decision in May. Stourbridge's Sam Eggington will feature on the September 8 undercard.

The headline bout is Khan's battle with Samuel Vargas. Also on bill is Ryan Kelly, defending the Midlands Area super welterweight title he won in May via stoppage at Villa Park against unbeaten Dordon man Kelcie Ball, and super bantamweight star Gamal Yafai. But the Welborn-Langford clash is the one that all Midlands boxing fans are looking forward to.

"We are delighted to have secured the rematch on such a big show," said Errol Johnson, of Black Country Boxing. "We thank Eddie Hearn and Matchroom Boxing for adding this fight to their bill."

"The first fight was worthy of television, so it's great to know that the wider boxing public will be able to witness the second instalment."

Welborn stunned big favourite Langford at Walsall Town Hall in May to take the British middleweight title – two judges gave the bout to Welborn by 114-113 with the third judge awarding it to Langford at 115-113.

Tickets are £40, £60, £80, £100 and £200 VIP from www.StubHub.co.uk or at www.arenabham.co.uk

Stour still at the head of the pack after game drawn

THE top of division three clash in the Birmingham and District League saw Stourbridge extend their lead by 16 points from the winning draw against Stratford at the Swans Nest.

Winning the toss, Stour's decision to bat first on a dry track to post a big score in the allocated 55 overs worked.

Team effort contributed to the 300 on the board. Opener Juhar Johal (38), Matt Bradley (49), Marverick Perry (68), number six Nathan Crudeli (50), Dwayne Crossgill (31), and from the final overs Jitesh Jivan-Patel's 18 not out brought up the 300 mark. Spinner James Urquhart's 14 overs cost 79 runs for three wickets.

The two contributions from Stratford's John Price (48) and Christopher Whelan (74) fell well short of the target. The blocking strategy frustrated the Stour bowlers who toiled hard in the heat to get the nine wickets.

A victory for Stour was foiled by the last pair Sam Douthwaite and Richard Smith as they successfully blocked 26 balls depriving their opponents of maximum points.

Charity wins in annual football contest



Mark Evans of Dudley Mind with staff from Higgs & Sons

AN annual football tournament, held in Stourbridge, raised more than £10,000 for charity.

Organised by Higgs & Sons, the annual six-a-side event took place at Stourton Park, the home of Stourbridge RFC with 42 teams competing.

The winners were PKF Cooper Parry, who took the title without conceding a goal, beating PD Financial in the final, a team that featured former Aston Villa player Stiliyan Petrov in its line-up.

All proceeds go to Higgs' charity of the year for 2018, Dudley Mind. Richard Griffiths, a partner

in the Brierley Hill-based firm's corporate team who helps to organise the event, said: "We have been running the tournament since 2006 and it is always rewarding to see so many people come and support us year upon year."

"Businesses and professionals come from across the West Midlands to take part and although there is always a healthy level of competition on the pitch, once the final whistle blows there is a real sense of everyone coming together to support a good cause whilst enjoying a fantastic day out."

CRASH MARS HEATHENS WIN

HEATHENS boss Will Pottinger hailed a 'sensational' display from Drew Kemp as they beat local rivals Birmingham.

The home side romped to a 52-37 win over the Brummies in a clash marred by a horror heat four crash which ruled out Chris Widman and Danyon Hume.

Widman and Hume tangled on the home straight and ploughed through the airframe. Hume aggravated an old arm injury and pulled out of the meeting.

James Shanes and Tom Bacon scored 27 between them for the Brummies, but Kemp reeled off an incredible paid 17 for the Heathens, writes Phil Lanning.

Pottinger said: "Drew was sensational. Obviously we took control after they lost Danyon and we hope both he and Chris are OK. But Drew was out of this world and was the stand-out performance for us."

"All the boys chipped in and we were solid. Losing Chris was tough but with Drew in such great form we coped really well with his absence and it's a good win."

Bacon and Shanes were outstanding for Brummies as they kept the visitors in contention despite losing Hume.

Bacon won heat one in style from Cradley guest Danny Ayres, but the home side took control when 15-year-old Kemp won heat two and, with Widman second, the Heathens were four in front.

The much-awaited war of the wonderkids' never materialised with Shanes roaring clear in heat three and Bickley left at the back behind rival Flint.

Then came the horror incident in heat four, followed by a repair to the airframe, and from then on it was the Bacon and Shanes show. However, when they weren't in the line-up Brummies were vulnerable and three maximum 5-1s from the rampant Heathens in six races left them reeling.

Test of pupils' sporting skills



Tag rugby at the Black Country School Games Summer Festival

MORE than 1,500 young athletes from schools around the Black Country came together for the seventh staging of The Black Country School Games Summer Festival.

Students from more than 80 schools across Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall went head-to-head at The University of Wolverhampton's Walsall campus.

After taking part in sportshall athletics, mul-

ti-skills, rounders, rugby, cricket, dodgeball, tri-golf, multi-skills SEND, football and duathlon, Wolverhampton were crowned champions – taking home the Joel Richards Black Country School Games Festival Cup for the second year in succession. The city's St Andrew's School won the multi-skills and its Girls' High the rounders.

● More pictures next week

Robins are taking flight to new nest

DUDLEY Town's club secretary is predicting a bright new era following a summer move to a new home.

The Robins have agreed a deal to play at Oldbury United's former York Road home, ending an 11-year stay at Brierley Hill's Dell Stadium. It is a move outside the Dudley borough for the 130-year-old West Midlands League club, who have led a nomadic existence since their famous But secretary Dave Ferrier believes it is a step in the right direction after a torrid last 12 months at The Dell.

Long-standing issues with using a complex primarily built for athletics were compounded by rotten weather and badgers digging up the pitch. Ferrier said: "It created havoc, to the point where our league position was in jeopardy and it looked like we would struggle to fulfil our fixture list."

"We just could not risk having another season like that."

Ferrier hopes a bar, and no running track around the pitch, will help The Robins build on progress made on the pitch last season. Manager Dean Whitehouse, who won the West Midlands Premier Division title with Tividale in 2012, guided the club to safety and began bringing through some of the club's promising young players.

Town play Halesowen Town in a friendly at the new ground on Saturday.

Long-serving chairman Stephen Austin has also indicated he will step down at the AGM. Ferrier said: "He's been a hugely important figure for the club."

Norman out on high in last race for DK

A SHORT trip for the Halesowen 10k fulfilled Dudley Kingswinford Running Club's needs for racing at the weekend.

There were plenty of runners from local clubs, Halesowen AC and Cobra, with the latter's Alex Stephenson the highest placed runner in 12th place.

Dave Norman was first home for the blue hoops in 10th place in 39.46 but this would be his last race for DK.

Gary Davies was 18th in 41.07 to claim the first M50, Kevin Herbert finished in 32nd in 43.43, Graham Wildgoose was 62nd in 47.23, Rory Elrick 82nd in 50.32, John Andrews 117th in 53.53 and Danielle Clements in 219th in 1.02.40.

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